The Ironstone Benefice
Deanery of Deddington
Diocese of Oxford
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A statement describing the conditions, needs and traditions of the parishes belonging to the Ironstone Benefice

Thank you for your interest in the role of Rector to the Ironstone Benefice. We are very happy to communicate informally with any potential applicants, so please do feel able to email John Bridgeman (js_bridgeman@yahoo.co.uk). John is one of our Churchwardens and at present chairing the process for the Benefice. However he will not be on the selection panel.

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Foreword from the Bishop of Dorchester

I am delighted to write a foreword to this profile for the new Rector of the Ironstone Benefice and I hope and pray that you may consider applying for this important post in the Oxford Diocese.

As a Diocese, we seek to be contemplative, compassionate and courageous in all that we do. Anyone taking up the post will, I hope, wish to engage with our vision as it develops, and to offer their own insights, ideas and energy as we explore what it means to be a Christ-like Church for the sake of God’s world.

The benefice is now on the cusp of change. With new housing developments under construction on its eastern and southern boundaries, the benefice population will grow significantly. This provides an opportunity to build on the good work already done by colleagues throughout the benefice, and to continue to develop and extend mission and ministry in the Ironstone area.

An expanding rural multi-parish benefice like this offers a wonderful opportunity for a fulfilling ministry that makes a real difference to its community and enables more people to encounter the love of God. With new residents arriving daily, this is a fascinating time to lead this team.

The benefice are particularly looking for someone who has energy and will inspire and encourage a vision for the future for the benefice, channelling the gifts of those in the churches, but also someone who will take the time to listen and understand the distinct communities and churches. The benefice is looking for a person with warmth, empathy and patience.

The benefice is situated in a beautiful part of Oxfordshire with good links to the M40, close to Banbury and with good local schools.

I do hope having read this profile that you consider applying for this post.

With every blessing,
About the Ironstone Benefice and its Surrounds

The Benefice, created twenty five years ago, lies to the North West of Banbury in delightful countryside. It embraces six PCC’s in a predominantly rural landscape, though the parish boundaries of Hanwell and Drayton now embrace parts of new housing developments on the very outskirts of Banbury. This market town has a canalside shopping centre, local industry and commerce, The Mill Arts Centre, a cinema, Banbury Museum, Spiceball Park Sports Centre, three secondary schools and Horton General Hospital. There is an excellent train Service to Oxford, London, Birmingham and beyond with services North to such cities as Manchester, York and Newcastle and south to Reading, Winchester, Southampton and Bournemouth.

Our villages of Alkerton, Balscote, Drayton, Hanwell. Hornton, Horley, Shenington and Wroxton are quite small. See Appendix 3. We believe embracing part of two areas of housing development will give the new Benefice Team and our congregations opportunities to reach more families and young people. We already have three families from the Banbury outskirts coming to Café Church and children from there come to all three of our schools. The residents will be able to experience some elements of village life, while within the villages, we shall benefit from their presence and their new ideas. All the villages are very sociable and active with plenty of opportunity for new people to join in. There are marked footpaths in each village making walking a pleasure. In addition, around 30 miles of the Oxfordshire cycle way is within the Cherwell Area.

We have eight Grade 1 or 2 Churches, mostly dating back to Norman times and all having their own interesting architectural features. The churches vary in size from the intimacy of Alkerton, the peace of Balscote, the new fellowship space of Hornton to the larger churches of Shenington, Drayton, Wroxton, Hanwell and Horley. Shenington and Alkerton are within one parish and share a PCC. Wroxton and Balscote are also historically connected as Wroxton cum Balscote. Drayton, Hanwell, Horley and Hornton each stand alone.

Three of our villages have primary schools which bring a youthful vibrance to our communities in term time! Shenington and Wroxton have church schools, Hornton and its Peachtree Pre-school Facility, are part of the Warriner Multi Academy Trust in Bloxham (in south of map). There are secondary schools in Banbury, Bloxham and Kineton, for those who enjoy sport Horley has a thriving cricket club, Hornton has a football field, pavilion and multi sports surface which includes tennis. Six of the villages have pubs which support cribbage, darts, dominoes, charity quizzes and in Summer Aunt Sally. Drayton has the only care home in the Benefice. Called Glebefields, it is situated next to the church. The Benefice has no shops, but Banbury is close by and Tysoe (in west of map) has a general store, PO, gift shop, cafe and hairdresser.

For useful websites please turn to Appendix 5 on page 21
Accommodation

Horley Rectory is in the centre of the village it has a small rear garden with open views. It lies on the opposite side of the main street to the Church of St Etheldreda which stands on high ground above it. The Pub is also opposite a few steps down the hill and the Cricket Club is nearby. The village is musically strong, and concerts are held annually in the church. There is a weekly parent run toddler group in The Old School which also serves as a village hall hosting such events as Film Club and Michael Harding Trust talks.

Both Rectories have 4 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms and 2 reception rooms, in addition to a study. They are both purpose built to the same plan.

Wroxton Rectory is in a secluded corner of the village. It has a large garden laid to grass and some old stables and outbuildings within its boundaries. It has a tree-lined drive and lies next door to the church of All Saints into which it has its own gate. Close by is Wroxton Abbey, now home to the Fairleigh Dickinson American University. The village has a 'good' (Ofsted 2020) Church of England Primary school with ninety five pupils. The pub is at present closed and may remain so but there is a Village Hall and a hotel.

Until 1995 the Rector lived in Horley but since that date, as the Benefice was enlarged to the south and west, the last two Rectors have lived in Wroxton and the House for Duty Priests in Horley. Different settings may be marginally preferred by different incumbents according to their personalities, interests, and stages of life and it may be possible to offer a choice so please feel able to enquire as to current position on letting if you are interested in this post by contacting John Bridgeman on js_bridgeman@yahoo.co.uk

However, be assured each house makes an excellent benefice base, has space and all that is needed to make a happy home. Built in the eighties, neither have the draughts or other inconveniences of Victorian and earlier vicarages!
Our vision has seven aspects

1) To establish a collaborative Benefice that aims to deepen faith and strengthen outreach

Within this vision we would aim to: take on the challenges of the twenty first century, growing our ministry to engage young families through links already forged with young and old, introducing them to the things we do already and incorporating their ideas on fellowship, worship and faith.

2) To celebrate and grow the particular strengths and potential of each individual church within our benefice

Within this vision we would aim that: each church continues to be a place of openness, warmth and inclusion that reflects the love and joy of the Christian message; that each church retains its identity but also grasps the challenge of closer Benefice ties, opening up new opportunities for each and every church to learn from one another.

3) To grow the family of the church in each of our communities making it a more central part of community life

Within this vision we can consider that: each church has circles of support, like a dart board, with committed supporters in the centre and festival supporters or purely financial contributors on the outer edge. We have support. Our challenge is to encourage people in every circle to take a step inwards.

4) Grow our ministry to families, schools and children

Within this vision we can build on: contact with Baptism Families; interaction with our primary schools in Shenington, Wroxton and Hornton; the congregation at Benefice Café Church; parents at Toddler Group in Horley and the rekindling of Welcome Packs for new families throughout the Benefice.

5) To have eight Eco Friendly Churches

Within this vision we can build on: two churches already having the Bronze eco award. We have had input from Martin Hodson a well known Christian Environmental Scientist and two Café Church services around the necessity for the world to care for creation.

6) To be a Benefice that celebrates Ecumenism and inter faith understanding

Within this vision we can build on: our links with the Methodist church in Hornton where we have one of the first Covenants to be established in this country; our having a tiny Catholic church in Wroxton; and talks we have had from representatives of other faith communities.

7) To be a Benefice that serves the wider world

Within this vision we can build on: charitable giving of parishes and a dedication to keep abreast of world affairs and the consequent needs.

We have enthusiasm for the development of new ideas to fulfil our vision and seek a Rector to lead us forward.
You as an applicant to be our Rector

We are looking for a positive, approachable leader, with enthusiasm for rural ministry, connecting with young and old across our Benefice and inspiring us. We invite you to celebrate our achievements and appreciate our traditions but hope you will also challenge us to take stock, and move towards becoming an ever more Christian Community aiming as our Diocesan Bishop Steven puts it: ‘To be a more Christlike Church, that is Contemplative, Compassionate and Courageous’.

We invite you to support the lay initiatives and activities which are central to the life of our churches and villages. These include creative use of our church buildings including Shenfest and Hanfest concerts, Horley’s Ironstone Concerts, Hornton’s use of their new Fellowship Space and A/V aids, Alkerton’s community cleaning days, Wroxton’s Reflection Mornings. Drayton’s lay led Matins and Balscote’s Advent Sunday Celebration. We hope that you have ideas for new initiatives too.

We hope that you would feel positive in responding to the increased pastoral opportunities and challenges presented by the new Banbury housing developments that lie within our boundaries. We aim to create a fertile, symbiotic relationship between rural and town.

We are looking for someone who is:

- Experienced in leading collaborative ministry and team-working
- Able to engage with our schools and minister to our young people
- Able to appreciate and support traditional forms of worship (including our use of both CW and BCP) and also to inspire us to try new ones
- Able to think imaginatively and lead creatively across a rural benefice and to embrace the wider role of the church in our community
- Able to lead the strategic development of the Ironstone Benefice
- Able to respond to the growing opportunities of developments within the Benefice boundaries, feel excited by the prospect of newcomers to the Benefice, and actively reach out and include them
- Administratively adept and experienced with modern technology
- Able to be an active presence among us

We will offer you

- A very warm welcome and the hand of friendship from every single parish.
- After you settle in, the appointment of a House for Duty Priest to assist you!
- A purpose built Rectory with 4 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, study & 2 reception rooms.
- A Benefice administrator in post who deals with the financial affairs of the Benefice.
- Weekly administrative help at the Rectory (to be appointed) to be used as best helps your ministry, available in term-time.
- Generous expenses and travel allowance.
- The most beautiful area in which to live.
- Doctors’ surgery within the benefice and six pubs!
- A toddler group, a pre-school and three primary schools (two of them church schools) within the benefice and secondary schools close by in Banbury, Bloxham and Kineton
- A Benefice that loves music and presents fantastic concerts in a range of genre.
- Open minded, forward thinking, progressive parishes welcoming new initiatives.
- Glorious rural ministry with a touch of invigorating urban on its borders!
An Introduction to our Eight Churches and Villages

St. Michael and all Angels Church  Alkerton is a small 12th Century Grade I church - an architectural gem set in idyllic surroundings. Together with Shenington, it forms one parish. A special feature of St Michael's is a recently created Lady Chapel designed for devotional worship by individuals or small groups. The normal service is BCP Holy Communion at 9 am on the first Sunday of the month, where average attendance is 12. There is no organ and the service is said. The day before the service, a combined cleaning party of both churchgoers and non-churchgoers, meets, and this has become a focus for social life based on care of the church building. After the cleaning, the community comes together for coffee and cake. The Rector is always welcome! During Shenfest St Michaels becomes a venue for interesting talks and at Christmas for a candlelight drinks party bringing together the villages of Alkerton and Shenington.

Photo: Alkerton villagers enjoying their monthly church cleaning morning.

Holy Trinity Church Shenington is a beautiful 12th Century church close to a village green giving many possibilities for events supported by the whole village. Normal services are 6pm Evensong on the 2nd Sunday and 9.45am CW HC on the 4th Sunday. Attendance is normally 12-20 but at festivals this rises significantly. There is a regularly used 1880 organ and the village has a strong musical tradition. For Christmas a special choir is raised and the popular summer ‘Shenfest’ music festival brings a series of varied concerts to the village. A member of the village sounds the Last Post for Remembrance. There is a voluntary aided C of E primary school in a 2003 building. The Rector, or the Bishop’s appointee, is a statutory governor, The Rector takes assembly twice per month and termly services are held in church. There is also a Doctors’ surgery and a small village hall that has been used by the PCC for festival meals, fundraising evenings and safeguarding training. Photo: following the ancient custom, grass is strewn throughout the church at Pentecost.
St Mary Magdalene Church Balscote is largely 14th/15th century and has an inviting simplicity. Services are CW HC on the 1st Sunday and village service on the 4th. Attendance is 10-15 but rises significantly at festivals. Balscote has a strong community and in 2011 built an eco-friendly village hall used by all residents and offering a great place for both Parish and Benefice church meetings plus festival functions which are very well supported. Rent is free, and the church and hall share fundraising 50/50. A notable feature of the church community is the absence of churchwardens. This situation is covered by ‘The Balscote Scheme’, which has worked well for five years. All activities normally covered by wardens are logged and allocated to members of the PCC.

Photo: The Village Hall laid out for Harvest lunch

St Peter’s Church Drayton is 800 years old. It lies in an isolated spot surrounded by fields. Services are Mattins with sung canticles on 2nd Sunday and BCP HC on the 4th Sunday. Drayton supports Benefice Café Church and eco efforts. Attendance at normal services is 12-16 with a significant rise at festivals. Throughout the period of a reduced Ministry Team, Drayton has continued worshipping weekly, taking it in turns to lead each service. There is a tradition of memorial lilies at Easter and memorial candles at Christmas. A Bible study group is important to Drayton and has continued during the vacancy. The village has Glebefields care home within its boundaries and also part of a new Banbury housing development. The congregation is a close knit community reflected in the linked arm carvings on the pillars, hence the photo.
St Etheldreda’s Church Horley is medieval, the largest in the Benefice, forming the focal point of the village. Services are CW HC on 1st Sunday (congregation of 8-16) and hosting Benefice Café Church in the Old School on 3rd Sunday. Festival services are well attended as are church social events. Horley is home to one of the Rectories. The pub is a social meeting place hosting the Church’s successful Harvest Auction for charity and Pilgrimage Lunches. The PCC is supported by a core of devoted lay parishioners and active Ladies Guild. All work tirelessly on a series of fund raising events. Horley has a thriving Cricket Club with adult and youth sections and a weekly Toddler Group. Annually Horley hosts two days of concerts bringing in world class musicians, such as international violinist Tamsin Waley-Cohen. The concerts end with a Sung Eucharist which packs the church. Photo: Lamb meets Churchwarden at Easter Café Church!

St Peter’s Church Hanwell can be traced back to 1154. The font remains but the rest dates back to the 13th/14th century. In 2008 the 5 bells were increased to 6 by a very generous gift. There is a team of ringers and the quality of the bells invite other ringers to come as well. Today there is a working party of villagers who meet monthly to care for their Church. The Rector is always welcome! Since the reduction of ministry, Hanwell has had just one Service of BCP HC on the 3rd Sunday where the congregation is small. However, festival services are well attended and Hanwell and Horley join for such services as Mothering Sunday. Regular giving with gift aid brings the highest percentage of income, but the village hall committee and the popular summer ‘Hanfest’ and winter ‘Hanfensive’ music festivals also raise much needed money for the church. One of the new Banbury housing developments reaches into Hanwell Parish, linked by a footpath. Photo: Hanfensive!
St John the Baptist Church Hornton dates from the 12th century. A recent refurbishment project has provided fellowship space, WC, servery, and modern audio-visual system. There is a covenant with the Methodist Chapel enabling the worshipping community to be in Chapel on the 1st and 3rd Sundays and in Church on the 2nd for CW HC, and the 4th for a village service. Attendance is 12-16 with much larger congregations at festivals. There is a Ladies’ Working Party who clean and arrange flowers weekly. Hornton has a thriving pre-school and primary school, part of the Warriner Multi Academy Trust. The village has many clubs and interest groups, an all-weather surface for tennis and junior sports, a football pitch with modernised pavilion and a pub that buzzes! The Chapel has a weekly coffee morning and monthly lunch. Photo: First use of the A-V system at ‘An evening for Send a Cow’.

All Saints Church Wroxton is mainly 14th century. Services are CW HC on 2nd Sunday and, during vacancy, a lay led service on 1st and 4th Sunday. Wroxton is the home of one of the Rectories. The primary school is Voluntary Aided and part of the Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust. The Rector takes a regular assembly and a termly Church Service. The village has a duck pond and Wroxton Abbey at its centre. The Abbey is now owned by an American University and walking in the attractive grounds is allowed. Wroxton also has a tiny thatched Catholic Church and a hotel. All Saints has the support of the village evidenced by the Street Fete, Progressive Dinner and monthly coffee morning. There is a rota for flowers and church cleaning and also a team of bell ringers, The photo is of the imposing tomb of Sir Thomas and Lady Pope. Sir Thomas was founder of Trinity College, Oxford which still owns much of the surrounding land.

A longer description of each church including architectural history may be obtained by emailing: js_bridgeman@yahoo.co.uk
Together in Covid!

How the Ironstone Benefice has been staying in touch with one another.

Unable to worship in our Churches, a programme of available Services on radio, television and live-stream has been emailed or delivered, weekly. Usually we have added a prayer or a feature called ‘Meet the Priest’ where local priests write interesting accounts of their lives and ministry.

Three of our Monthly Benefice Café Church Services have become ‘virtual’. First, we set a challenge to create an Easter Garden during Holy Week and distributed the resulting picture collage. In May we shared a Sanctuary Wild Worship Field Guide for a virtual day out celebrating creation, challenging families to record as many of the suggested images as possible ready for when we can meet again. In June we celebrated Father’s Day inviting people to write prayers of thanks for the next weekly Service sheet.

Through letters, we have kept our links with Glebefields Care Home. Each village has found its own way to support the vulnerable but emails and calls fly between parishes and many people are contributing to our being a benefice that is staying in touch.

Three Easter Gardens for April’s Café Church Challenge, from Horley, Hanwell and Hornton

In April: Unable to serve it at Café Church Sue P. (Horley Ladies’ Guild) shared her Shortbread recipe needing only 4 ingredients, while shelves were rather Covid bare!
4oz softened unsalted butter, 4oz plain flour, 2oz caster sugar 2oz cornflour

In May, Kate introduced us to The Wild Worship Field Guide: www.thesanctuarycentr.org/whereworldandworshipmeet
This opened our eyes and brilliantly enhanced our walks.

In June, Amanda found crafty present ideas for children running up to Fathers’ Day . e.g. her garden noughts & crosses – 4 sticks lashed together and 10 stones marked 0 or X.

In June, Lindy was one of the people who wrote a Fathers’ Day prayer:
Father, thank you for an earthly father who cared, who helped us bear the bad and celebrate the good in life. Whose magical tenor voice filled a church with song and whose fingers played carols by heart on the piano at Christmas. Who, when we received monetary gifts always said “Spend some, save some and give some away”, a mantra that stays with us today. Thank you Amen.
Our services and other worship

Since our Associate Priest left in April 2019 our Rector aimed, in his final year with us, for every church to have one Service of Holy Communion per month in their own church with the whole Benefice being invited to Café church on third Sunday and to a Benefice Communion on fifth Sundays. The expectation would be no greater than this on the appointment of a new Rector until a House for Duty Priest were appointed. There are also local retired and semi-retired priests who know our churches and who are kind enough to help us.

Before Covid 19 four churches had monthly Village Matins or Evensong Services taken by the LLM and two churches organised their own services led by the congregation (See Appendix 1). The LLM seeks to retire by the end of 2021 but the innovative congregations will remain!

On the third Sunday there is an Early Communion in one church followed by Benefice Café Church hosted by Horley in their old school building next to the church (photo below: one table of the six or seven set out each month). In the past there has been a planning team led by the Rector with the service written by the LLM, craft ideas provided by a young mother, music advice from a pianist, and regular help from a teenager. Children often read, compose prayers, share their craft ideas and enable us to experience an informal approach to church music in the round or using popular songs that fit our theme. Our youngest attendee is under two and our oldest over ninety years old. Horley Ladies Guild always provide delicious coffee and pastries!

We also have a range of other worship, prayer and study opportunities. There is a weekly Bible study group in Drayton, Monthly reflection morning in Wroxtton, and pilgrim walks around our Benefice and the Deanery. The latter is walked on Palm Sunday. During Advent and Lent there are House Groups for study and fellowship. Some churches have prayer leaflets to aid personal prayer and meditation.

The wider community

In our parishes, church members work with other members of the community to organise village groups and activities, such as Christmas fairs, fetes, progressive dinners and drinks, harvest auctions and regular, well attended coffee mornings, lunches and toddler groups.

Volunteers in all parishes help with the maintenance of the churches and their grounds.
With the new housing developments, the population will grow in two of our parishes, and we wish to tend to them as well as our more established communities. We do reach out to families, teenagers and children but believe we can make our churches yet more welcoming to young people, making them feel at home, as part of the wider church family.

We wish to continue to look outside our own Benefice to support those in need, hence our charitable giving. We have also invited speakers to talk to us about Islam, Judaism and Sikhism to increase our contact with and understanding of other faiths. A recent visiting preacher gave insight on the challenges faced by the Church in China.

We continue to maintain and enhance our beautiful church buildings. We encourage more creative use of our churches both for village activities and cultural events. With four churches suffering lead theft in the last year, we have more than the usual remedial work in hand.

Music

We have a strong musical heritage, holding music festivals with world class performers such as International violinist Tamsin Waley Cohen. Our audiences come from far beyond the benefice for our series of concerts that are held annually in Hanwell, Horley and Shenington.

Performances are held in church and help to raise funds for the benefice. Hornton has held a concert by The Archeaus Quartet and with the church refurbishment, would like to learn from others and present an annual event to fit in with the other parishes. Drayton joins our musical tradition through their monthly sung Matins.

Photo: a moving concert in Horley packs the church

Scratch choirs come together for Christmas and other festivals, but there is scope and an appetite to establish a more regular choir or choirs.

Schools

There are three primary schools in the benefice, at Hornton, Shenington and Wroxton. Hornton School is part of the Warriner Multi Academy Trust of Bloxham. They use the Church occasionally and we are encouraging them to use the space more. Shenington is a voluntary aided, C of E school, belonging to the Diocese of Oxford and the Parish of Shenington with Alkerton. The school is controlled by the governing body rather than the LEA. A 2016 OFSTED judged it to be a ‘good’ school. Wroxton School is part of the Oxford Diocesan Multi Academy Trust. A 2020 OFSTED judged it to be a ‘good’ School. The Rector takes regular assemblies at both church schools and is a presence at their termly and festival services in the churches. These are mainly presented by staff and pupils and are attended by parents. We have presented ‘Open the Book’ in the past and, with inspiration, could start a new team for this or something similarly led by the laity.
Charitable activities

Each church donates to charities of its choosing. They are wide ranging, and include Tearfund, the local hospice and other local, national and international good causes. A list of recently supported charities is at Appendix 2.

Eco Church

We are working to maintain and improve the environment, with an immediate focus on our churches and grounds. Each church has taken forward its own initiatives, and no doubt we will take stock and learn from each other as things progress.

St Etheldreda’s Church and St John the Baptist Church have each gained a Bronze Eco Church Award Certificate in recognition of efforts to care for God’s earth. The following areas have been addressed: Worship & Teaching, Management of Land & Buildings, Community and Global Engagement and Lifestyle.

Our Pastoral Work

Ironstone does not have a formal Pastoral Committee at present. This possibility was explored by our last two incumbents but it became apparent that, in our small villages, each community had its own natural network of care and support which also kept the ministry informed. This may change with the growth of the new housing developments or the experience of a new Rector.

The pastoral role of the Rector is hugely important and s/he keeps abreast with Benefice needs by supporting those involved in Baptisms, Marriages and Funerals. Involvement in the life of our Church schools, a Toddler Group, coffee mornings, village events and, in some villages, the pub, provide a variety of ways to develop strong links within the Benefice.

There is one care home in the Benefice, Glebefields in Drayton. The LLM administers Communion by Extension monthly, organises seasonal Services or activities with the events staff and makes chaplaincy visits to residents as requested.

Safeguarding is very well managed at Benefice level. Training has been undertaken at appropriate levels according to work undertaken, with our Safeguarding Officer organising basic training across the Benefice and having a good relationship with the Diocese. Contact information is available in each church and on the website.

Financial Summary

Although there are variations between the parishes of the Benefice, the overall position of the Benefice is a positive one. We have split the finance into 2 parts - regular activity and major works activity.

As regards regular activity, in 2019 we had an income of close to £100,000 and spent just over £90,000 on parish share, insurance, maintenance, clergy expenses donations to causes and church running costs, so showing overall a small surplus of £7,000.

Major works of maintenance were completed on 3 churches while 4 churches had fund raising income – either related to completed works or to cover future projects. In 2019 we received £68,000 from fundraising and grants and spent £49,000.

While some parishes have better reserves than others, overall our reserves are good. For more information contact our Benefice Administrator: giles.dessain@btinternet.com
A Welcome from Deddington Deanery

Deddington Deanery is one of the larger and more diverse deaneries in the Diocese of Oxford. There are twenty-nine parishes, with thirty-four churches, in twelve benefices. The resident population exceeds 66,000, with c.47,000 in the largest town, Banbury. Our demographic covers everything from affluent villages to significant deprivation.

Chapter

In our deanery, incumbent status clergy are encouraged to make a priority of the regular lunches, which (Covid permitting) take place most months. This informal and confidential space is greatly valued by deanery. During the pandemic we have Zoomed on a fortnightly basis to support one another. We had already built trust and strong support networks, underpinned by two mini breaks to Bournemouth in the last few years to worship, plan and grow together. There have been considerable changes in clergy within the deanery over the last year, so there are many opportunities ahead for mutual support and growth. In addition, there will be opportunities to bring together licensed and retired clergy and lay ministers for discussion. Spouses are most welcome at social gatherings.

Deanery Synod

The Deanery Synod meets up to four times a year at different venues throughout the deanery and the aim is to make the meetings hospitable, purposeful and enjoyable occasions. There is often a keynote speaker or a workshop to consider items of mutual interest.

The Area Dean is assisted by two Associate Area Deans who work closely with the Lay Chair and deanery treasurer. The Standing Committee is increasingly taking a strategic approach to the work of the deanery, to free up synod’s agenda, providing space for key-note speakers such as the diocesan Disability Advisor and Lead Chaplain amongst Deaf People.

Locally based training has included parish websites, safeguarding, eco church and leading all-age worship. A quiet day was held in the summer of 2019 in a beautiful garden in the north of the deanery. The deanery has many church primary schools so there is much wisdom to share on governance and parish engagement.

Deanery Mission & Pastoral Plan

These plans are in the process of being revised. In light of the current pandemic we must recognize how these difficult times limit the planning of change. However, we need to ensure

- We engage with the emerging priorities of the national church and the Diocese, including the Diocesan Common Vision (to become a Christ like church for the sake of the world)
- We encourage churches to take their own approaches to address the missional opportunities and challenges within their own unique location e.g. extensive new housing, population growth, schools, older people, developing a mixed economy of church.
- We provide support and an opportunity to share good practice
- We have the right ministerial deployment and resources to support all this.

We have a clear sense that we are called to be an enabling deanery – helping parishes as they seek to live out God’s mission and ministry. Sarah Sharp Area Dean
### Appendix 1: Service Schedule

Planned Services Across The Ironstone Benefice for May 2020 which follows the pattern put in place by the outgoing Rector, once he was without an Associate Priest. This would be the expectation before the appointment of a House for Duty Priest but there are local retired and semi retired priests who would help.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Dates</th>
<th>Hanwell</th>
<th>Horley</th>
<th>Hornton</th>
<th>Drayton</th>
<th>Wroxton</th>
<th>Balscote</th>
<th>Shenington with</th>
<th>Alkerton</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Sunday</td>
<td>No Service</td>
<td>CW HC 11.00am</td>
<td>Meth Led in Chapel</td>
<td>Community lay-led 11.00am</td>
<td>Lay Led Reflection 9.45</td>
<td>CW HC 10.00am</td>
<td>No Service</td>
<td>BCP HC 9.00am</td>
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<td>3rd May</td>
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<tr>
<td>2nd Sunday</td>
<td>No Service</td>
<td>No Service</td>
<td>CW HC11.00 am</td>
<td>Mattins LLM 11.00am</td>
<td>CW HC 9.45am</td>
<td>No Service</td>
<td>Evensong 6.00 LLM</td>
<td>No Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th May</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3rd Sunday</td>
<td>9.00am BCP</td>
<td>Benefice Café Church 10.am. CC Team</td>
<td>Meth Led in Chapel 11.00am</td>
<td>No service</td>
<td>No service</td>
<td>No service</td>
<td>No service</td>
<td>No service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17th May</td>
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<tr>
<td>4th Sunday</td>
<td>No Service</td>
<td>No Service</td>
<td>Ang/Meth Village Service LLM 11.00am</td>
<td>BCP HC 11.00am</td>
<td>Village Service Community Lay Led</td>
<td>Village Service LLM 9.45am</td>
<td>CW HC 9.45am</td>
<td>No Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24th May</td>
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<tr>
<td>5th Sunday</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ONE BENEFICE SERVICE FOR FIFTH SUNDAY VENUE TBA 10.30 am</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31st May</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Those in green are designated to have the Rector presiding. Churches have a variety of ideas to increase Benefice Cohesion, and it has been suggested that once the benefice is fully staffed an increase in Combined Benefice Holy Communion Services may be welcome, particularly if a Benefice Choir were re-formed.
Appendix 2: Charities supported by the Parishes of the Ironstone Benefice (2018 – 2020)

Banbury Young Homeless Project

Childrens’ Society

Combat Stress

Katharine House Hospice

Royal British Legion

Save the Children Fund

Send A Cow Project (Rwanda)

Tear Fund

Toilet Twinning Project (Zambia)

Disaster Relief Committee for Syrian Refugees

Water Aid

The Care Workers Charity

Charities within individual villages eg village halls and playgrounds
Appendix 3: The Villages and their Churches

All our churches are beautiful, full of character and individual architectural interest, with each in its own rural village setting. Most parishes have a village hall or similar venue and a pub. In-filling has made some central village numbers rise a little since 2011 but not significantly except within the two parish boundaries described on page 20, where numbers are set to rise around their borders. Those marked LT have had a lead theft in the last two years the fallout from which has been excellently managed with churches concerned giving advice to other parishes who have since installed alarm systems so that the Benefice is much less vulnerable to these very expensive occurrences,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Population (*from 2011 census)</th>
<th>Parish Electoral role</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Pupils</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alkerton and Shenington LT</td>
<td>425*</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balscote</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drayton LT</td>
<td>242*</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanwell</td>
<td>236*</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horley</td>
<td>336*</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hornton</td>
<td>328*</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wroxton LT</td>
<td>366</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 4: Hanwell and Drayton Development Plan

The Parish of Hanwell.

The new development is on the southern boundary where the town of Banbury is developing northwards. The development is by Persimmon, and Davidsons Homes. As well as Hanwell, one can see the villages of Drayton, Wroxton and Horley marked.

The Parish of Drayton.

The new development by Bloor Homes is on the Eastern border from south of the Stratford Road southwards and there is also to be development in the Norh-west of the parish with a community centre and supermarket. Drayton, Wroxton and Hanwell are marked on this map.
Appendix 5: Links to Useful Websites

Local Government:  
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk
www.cherwell.gov.uk

Local Diocese:  
www.oxford.anglican.org

Benefice Schools:  
www.hortonprimaryschool.co.uk
www.shenington.oxon.sch.uk
www.wroxtonceprimaryschool.co.uk

Village Websites:  
www.balscote.blogspot.com
www.hanwellvillage.com
www.horton.org.uk
www.oxfordshirevillages.co.uk
www.thehorleyviews.com
www.wroxton.org.uk

Local Surgery:  
www.fennycomptonandsheningtonsurgery.nhs.uk

Local Walks:  
www.cpreoxon.org.uk
www.ldwa.org.uk
www.my.viewranger.com
www.ramblers-oxon.org.uk

Local History:  
www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/oxon/vol9