



THE TEW BENEFICE PARISH PROFILE

Welcome to the Profile for these parishes. Thank you for your interest in this post. We hope you will find plenty within these pages to help you discern whether to explore further the possibility of ministry here.

This is a slightly unusual post, in that it is for a House for Duty Incumbent and the Vicarage is provided by a local Trust rather than by the diocese. Given the part-time nature of this role, there is good support here for the new incumbent, including administrative help, and much good work has been done in recent years to enable the parishes to operate effectively. You will see from what follows that the need is for a parish priest who will be an active pastor willing to engage locally with individuals, community life, and the school. There is a strong theme of traditional worship in these parishes but also a desire to encourage others to discover its beauty and spiritual depth for themselves.

As a diocese, we are working to become a more Christ-like Church for the sake of God's world, through being contemplative, compassionate and courageous. We want to make a difference in the world, including tackling the climate emergency. We want to grow disciples and to teach the Christian faith. We have an ambitious plan to grow 750 new congregations across the diocese, to grow a Christian presence on the many (some huge) areas of new housing across our three counties. We want to develop and grow ministry among children, young people and schools. We want to bless our largest and fastest growing city in the Diocese, Milton Keynes. This is an emerging and evolving vision, with which all clergy and parishes are warmly encouraged to engage, both in their own contexts and parishes and more widely, as we continue to dwell in God's Word and discern his purpose for us.

Thank you for your interest in this post. If you would like a conversation, please do be in touch (archdeacon.dorchester@oxford.anglican.org).

Every blessing as you discern whether God is calling you to serve here.

Judy French

Archdeacon of Dorchester

BACKGROUND

The three parishes of the Tew Benefice, which was formed in 2014, are St. Michael and All Angels in Great Tew, St John the Evangelist in Little Tew and St. Nicholas in Heythrop in rural North Oxfordshire OX7 4AF. <https://tewbenefice.org.uk/>.

The position is that of 'house-for-duty' incumbent (Sundays plus two full days, or the equivalent spread over the week).

The mainly C18th Vicarage is owned by a Trust (The Great Tew Charity Estate) which is responsible for its upkeep and maintenance and the Trust contributes towards the heating bill & the basic upkeep of the garden.

There is one service per week for the Benefice with Holy Communion being celebrated at 10am on the 1st, 3rd & 5th Sunday at St. Michael's, the 2nd Sunday at St. Nicholas and the 4th Sunday at St. John's, with parishioners attending each other's churches.

The congregations are predominantly local parishioners but St. Michaels attracts worshippers from a wider radius because of its more traditional Liturgy with a special emphasis on musical participation and the participation of children in Sunday worship.

Each parish has its own PCC and finances but work closely together and have joint PCC meetings twice a year. An Administrator has recently been appointed for the three Parishes and provides up to 5 hours/week administrative support.

The three parishes are close together geographically and socially, although each church has its own atmosphere and its own character. Over the last six years, the three parishes have come both to worship together and work together.

There are monthly lunches during the winter for the Benefice which reach out to everyone in the local community. Church outings have also been held in previous years.

The Benefice coordinates its giving, with local and international charitable organisations supported through Advent and Lent retiring collections, and the local Food Bank receiving Harvest Festival donations. Joint benefice fundraising events have been organised with the most recent Cricket match against a team from Soho Farmhouse raising £12,000.

THE VICARAGE

The Vicarage is a handsome mainly C18th listed house of large & elegant proportions with a large garden.

There are five bedrooms, a big drawing room with French windows, a dining room, study & snug, together with a kitchen, utility room, three bathrooms and a cloakroom.

The Trust maintains the Vicarage and pays for the upkeep and any running repairs. Currently the Trust pays for the mowing of the garden but other support may be possible.

The Trust is funded through an endowment which is invested to provide an income to cover all annual expenditure.



THE BENEFICE

There is a strong farming tradition in the Benefice, although this is now balanced by the many professional families who have recently settled in the villages. The age range of the congregations is wide, from very small children to those in their nineties. Many have lived locally all their lives, most live here full time but a number of week-ending families are also closely involved in the lives of the churches.

The congregations are interested in preserving what is good about the old and embracing some of the new but the maintaining of traditional worship is vital, especially at St. Michael's in continuing to draw in worshippers from a wider radius.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2025

Our challenges, strengths and opportunities across the Benefice comprise:

- Drawing in a larger congregation including engagement of new residents in the villages, especially young families and from Great Tew School, without alienating any of the present congregation. We encourage all villagers to engage and worship with us, especially at the more popular church events, i.e.: Easter, Christmas, Harvest etc, with the hope of permanently enlarging the congregation.
- Increasing use of the PGS scheme; with new residents this could be an opportunity to enlarge our regular donations.
- There has been some discussion of becoming one parish. This challenge could prove to be a positive opportunity.

BENEFICE REQUIREMENTS

The parishes feel that what they most need from their priest is:

1. Pastoral guidance from someone whom they can respect spiritually, intellectually and personally.
2. Domiciliary pastoral visits for the elderly and infirm residents of the parishes.
3. Support for the children in the congregations and collaboration with the Head Teacher of Great Tew Primary School.
4. Engage with the changing nature of rural communities
5. Sustain the traditions of worship whilst attracting larger congregations.

ST MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS, GREAT TEW

The Church

St. Michael's is the largest of the three churches and the earliest parts date back to Norman times, but the main body of the church is from the C13th & C14th. The healthy number of visitors throughout the year are attracted by the tranquil setting and the beautiful interior, which includes Medieval wall paintings, a particularly fine marble sculpture by Sir Francis Chantrey and a fine, recently restored C19th country organ made by Henry Williams. Comments in the Visitors Book are a testament to the love and affection that visitors, both new & old, have for the church.

Heating panels have recently been installed in the pews of the main aisle which have successfully warmed the congregation and also reduced the heating costs, heating the congregation rather than the roof. The church is currently undergoing exciting building work to create an extension to provide access for those with impaired mobility, house a new vestry, provide running water for a kitchen & flowers, as well as providing storage space and two loos (which are much requested at weddings & funerals); at the same time, work will be done to tidy up & maintain the interior of the church. Funds for all this work have already been raised.

Services

As of 2019 there are two services a month: on the first Sunday in which children play an active part, on the third Sunday and when there is a fifth Sunday. There were 36 on the Electoral Roll and attendance is usually in the mid 20's. In 2019 there were:

- 148 at the Easter service, 230 at the carol service and 227 attended the Christmas services in total.
- 4 baptisms, 6 weddings and 3 funerals.

The village includes a number of week-enders, some of whom make up the congregation but many of the congregation come from a wide radius outside the village, being drawn to the unique & special atmosphere. The style of worship is liturgically traditional and leans towards the Higher end of the Anglican spectrum with sung Eucharist and friendly services which accommodate children through a Sunday School, with a specific Children's service once a month where children participate fully in the readings & prayers. The nearby Soho Farmhouse has drawn in extra weddings & blessings in recent years.

The church is used regularly for events including talks and concerts. The fine Organ, which was restored in 2016 after a successful fundraising campaign raised £75,000, is a particular draw for musicians with internationally renowned organist Thomas Trotter playing in a recent concert. The brasses, wall paintings, and monument to Mary Anne Boulton, together with its secluded pastoral setting, are appreciated by many of the international and British visitors to the church which is open daily.

The Village

The village has a thriving primary school (with close links to the church), a well-known pub and a very successful cricket club which is based at The Tew Centre – the village's communal village hall.

Finance

<i>Current Funds</i>		<i>Liabilities</i>	
Current Account	£ 2,842.00	Ministry Support Account	£1,200.00 due Sept
Organ Account	£ 1,551.00	Oil	£654.00 due shortly
Income for 2019	£ 24,166.30		
Expenditure	£ 27,131.76		
Difference	(£ 2,965.46)		

The income for 2020 will be much lower as there is no income from weddings etc and some liabilities such as insurance and parish share are ongoing. We do have income of nearly £8,000 a year from the Parish Giving Scheme and other Planned giving. Also, due to the building project, all fundraising has been directed there, including collections from weddings. There is scope for directing more to the day to day expenses of running the church.

In addition to the PCC account, there is also a Friends' of St.Michaels account which is currently being used to fund the Building Project although approximately £10k will be kept in this account for future church maintenance.

Quinquennial

Following on from the Quinquennial Report of February 2018, necessary repairs have taken place, including a further Inspection & Report on the Bell Tower in April 2019 which resulted in action being taken to make the Tower safe. A number of issues within the Quinquennial will be addressed as a result of the Building Project currently being undertaken in 2020.



ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST, LITTLE TEW

The Church

The beautiful parish of Little Tew (LT) was formed in 1850 and the small, Grade 2 Victorian church was completed in 1858. The church is located in the centre of the village, within the churchyard. Its most prominent feature is the beautiful stained glass window (behind the stone carved pulpit) depicting "The Passion". The North Tower contains six bells and we also have two portable ramps for use at the front door.

There is an outside lavatory and sink (which relies on rain water). The church is open daily, 9:30 – 17:00 and a key holder list is operated by villagers and church goers alike. We operate a halogen heating system during services and a loop system is used to assist the audibly challenged. We also have a CD music system, which is used in the absence of the organist.

Services

As of 2019 we have one Benefice service a month, (on the fourth Sunday) with an average of 25 people in attendance.

Ash Wednesday – Benefice Eucharist with Imposition of Ashes

Good Friday – am "Children's Easter Story and Gardens", followed by an afternoon Devotional Service. (Both are for the whole Benefice.)

Christmas Eve – Benefice Christingle Service, candlelit. This service is very well attended, usually the church is full to capacity.

- The vicar is supported by 1 church warden and a dedicated PCC of 6.
- We have 17 people on the Church Electoral Roll and we are a medium to low church.
- In 2019 we conducted: 0 Weddings, 1 Baptism, 2 Funerals and 1 Burial. We have one wedding moved to 2021 from 2020 due to COVID 19.

The Village

As older members of the community dwindle, either to natural causes or relocating, Little Tew village is fast becoming a place of young families, making it their permanent home. Combined with the longer standing residents, this makes for a wonderful mix of people. At present the population is 253.

Little Tew has its own meeting place, The Timberyard Room. It is quite small but serves as a great place for Parish meetings, a local health group, private hire and monthly coffee mornings (at which we raise funds for the church).

Recently a local newsletter has started in Little Tew which provides news electronically for the parish and outlying farms, keeping villagers informed of local and church affairs.

Twice a year, church goers and villagers alike come together to "Clear up" the churchyard, which is always accompanied by coffee and homemade cake.

As a church we are very supportive of the local community and that works both ways. We are a very approachable, social and friendly bunch and have a relaxed style and we feel this enhances our appeal.

Finance

Income and Expenditure for year end 31/12/19			
Little Tew PCC			
		£	£
Cash at start of year brought forward from prior year			
HSBC Account (ending 669)		4545.26	
Natwest Account (ending 726)		13066.71	
		17,612	
Receipts	Natwest	1801.28	
	HSBC	11,481.64	
Payments			23859.57
		30,895	-23859.57
Total cash 31/12/19			7,035
Current Account (ending 669) for ye			9154.32
Natwest Account (ending 726) for ye			0
carry forward cash balance ye			9154.32
Unrecocilling items			
Cheques not cashed by year end 31/12/19			2274
Cheque in 2018 accounts but cashed in 2019			155
Difference			0.00

Quinquennial (February 2015)

Over the last 5 years the present incumbent and church warden have constantly reviewed the Quinquennial report, focusing/acting on the priority "A" points listed, achieving many of these, funds permitting. We are in a good state or repair but we are continually referring back to the list of B,C and D to see how we can best address an outstanding issues.



ST NICHOLAS, HEYTHROP

The Church

Although Heythrop is the smallest of the three parishes, it supports two church buildings. The old church was built in the 11th/12th century and now consists only of the chancel, the nave having been pulled down shortly after the new church was built.

The new church, along with most of the village, was constructed in the 1870s. It was designed by Sir Arthur Blomfield, and is a good example of Victorian Gothic architecture, incorporating a fine timber roof structure, decorated with carved wooden angels. The exterior of the roof was replaced in 2008, and the building is overall in sound condition. There is a fine organ by Wordsworth and Maskell which was restored about 35 years ago and is well maintained. The tower has provision for six bells, but only three are installed, and they may only be swung, not rung.

Services

We normally hold a single service each month, on the second Sunday. This is usually Holy Communion, but there are variations through the year. In the autumn we hold a 'Blessing of the Animals' service, which is well supported, helped by attendees from Heythrop Zoological Gardens, the Chipperfield family's wild animals business which is in the parish. In recent years we have also held two services in the old church - a 'Songs of Praise' in July, and an Advent carol service. At Christmas we have a carol service, but the services on Christmas Day, Easter, Whitsun, and Remembrance Sunday are held at Great Tew.

Attendance at our services is swelled by people from the other parishes in the Benefice, for which we are very grateful.

Normal Sundays	- low 20s	Weddings	- 1-2 p.a.
Carols	- circa 50	Funerals	- 1-2 p.a.
Animal Service	- circa 35	Baptisms	- 1 p.a.
Advent	- circa 35		

The Village

The parish of Heythrop is very rural and is the smallest of the three parishes in the Benefice. The population is around 90 people, with a good spread of ages, including young children. About 60 people live in the village and on surrounding farms; the rest live at Heythrop Park, which, although statutorily part of Heythrop, is more than three miles away by road and is effectively part of Enstone.

The village population today consists largely of owner-occupiers, with a few second-homes and also some rented properties. Most people commute to work in nearby towns, with an increasing number working from home. With such a small population, the number of church attendees is limited, and it is always a struggle to get volunteers. The Electoral Roll fluctuates around about 10 people, with 5 on the PCC, plus the vicar. In addition there are residents who, although they don't

participate in church activities, are supportive of fund raising and for their major life-events.

Finance

2019 Income

Collections	£2,772
Donations	£2,915
Charity Event	£4,500
Weddings & Funerals	£1,242
Other Income	£2,265

Total £13,694

Cash and investments £80,405

2019 Expenditure

Parish Share	£2,515
Insurance	£1,540
Clergy Expenses	£1,040
Repairs	£2,683
Charities	£575
Other	£735

Total £9,088

Quinquennial

The last Heythrop Quinquennial was in September 2019 - there were no serious problems and we will be working on the list progressively.

