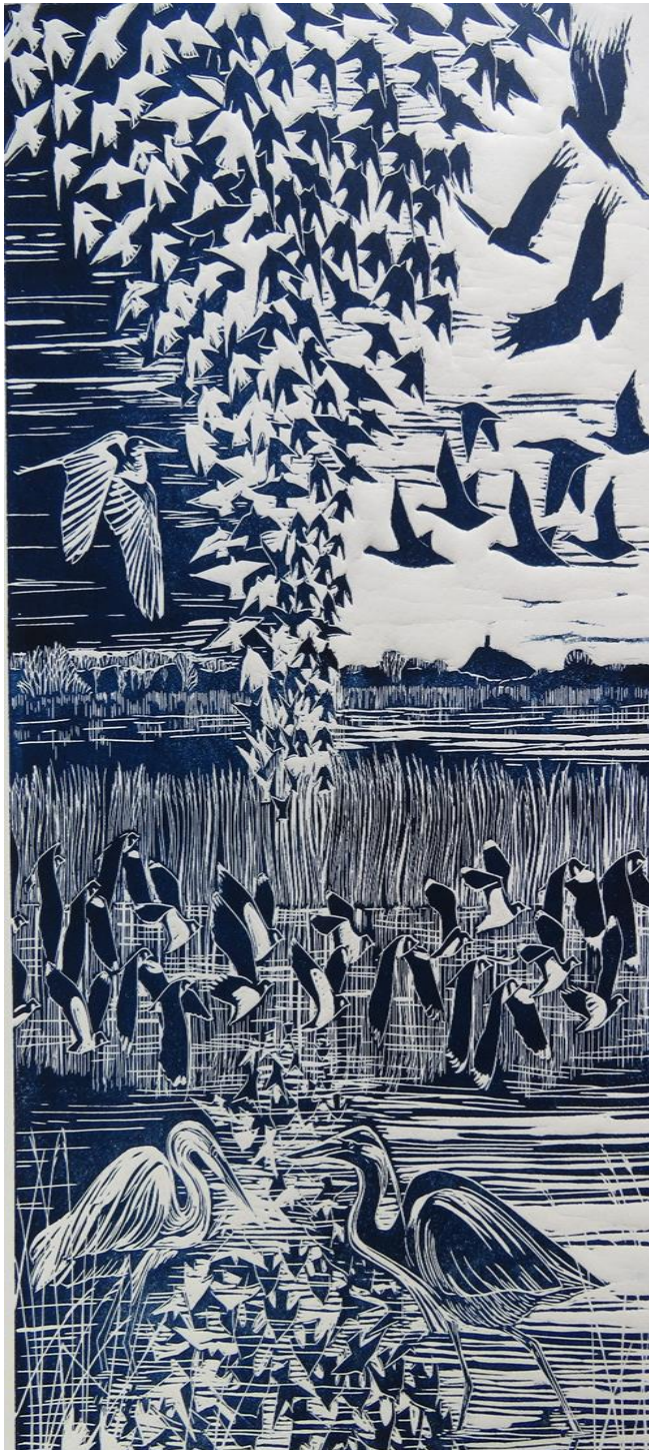


Benefice of Woolavington with Cossington and Bawdrip together with the Benefice of Pawlett and Puriton



Benefice Profile

May 2020

By Jackie Curtis - local artist in Bawdrip

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Our Patrons: Dean and chapter of Windsor

Frontispiece: J. Curtis (www.jcurtisart.com, @jcurtisart)

Welcome

We look forward to welcoming you.

Dear reader,

Welcome to our Benefice Profile! Our hope is that within these pages you will learn something of who we are and who we hope to become and how you might play your part. We've tried to capture a snapshot of life in our churches and villages, together with the potential and opportunities which excite us.

The Deanery Mission plan is for the five parishes to join together in a united benefice. The Diocese is currently moving forward with the necessary consultations. You will help take this forward.

We are the ordinary people of an extraordinary God.

Are you one of us?



We pray that the Holy Spirit will guide you;
That the love of Jesus enfolds you
And the word of God speaks to you
As you seek to discern his will for your next step in
ministry;
God bless you and bring you His peace.

Welcome

Archdeacon Simon Hill:

"These parishes of Woolavington, Cossington and Bawdrip are realistically looking forward to the future and look to warmly welcome a new incumbent.

Pastoral reorganisation is taking place in the Deanery. This is something that has been on the cards for a number of years. It is envisaged that these parishes will work more closely with neighbouring Puriton and Pawlett in the near future.

I would be very happy to chat further with prospective candidates about possibilities for future ministerial provision."

Our Vision

To live and journey together, striving to be
the body of Christ, open to all, in our villages

We extend a warm welcome to everyone to those who are single, married, divorced, widowed, straight, gay, confused, well-heeled or down at heel. We especially welcome wailing babies and excited toddlers.

We welcome you whether you can sing like Pavarotti or just growl quietly to yourself. You're welcome here if you're 'just browsing', just woken up or just got out of prison. We don't care if you're more Christian than the Archbishop of Canterbury, or haven't been to church since Christmas ten years ago.

We welcome those who are over 60 but not grown up yet and to teenagers who are growing up too fast. We welcome keep fit dads and football mums, starving artists, tree huggers, latte sippers, vegetarians, junk food eaters. We welcome those who are in recovery or still addicted. We welcome you if you're having problems, are down in the dumps or don't like 'organised religion'.

We offer a welcome to those who think the earth is flat, work too hard, don't work, can't spell or are here because Granny is visiting and wanted to come to church.

We welcome those who are inked, pierced, both or neither. We offer a welcome to those who could use a prayer right now, had religion shoved down their throat as kids or got lost on their way and wound up here by mistake.

We welcome pilgrims, tourists, seekers, doubters...

Wooden Cross by Brian Shields-Probert of Bawdrip from a fallen yew branch in the churchyard.

We offer



Our key tasks

Leading our spiritual journey:

establishing a safe culture of curiosity and exploration of faith in diverse ways.

Building up the church community:

enabling and encouraging us all to explore and develop our gifts and potential so that we can all contribute.

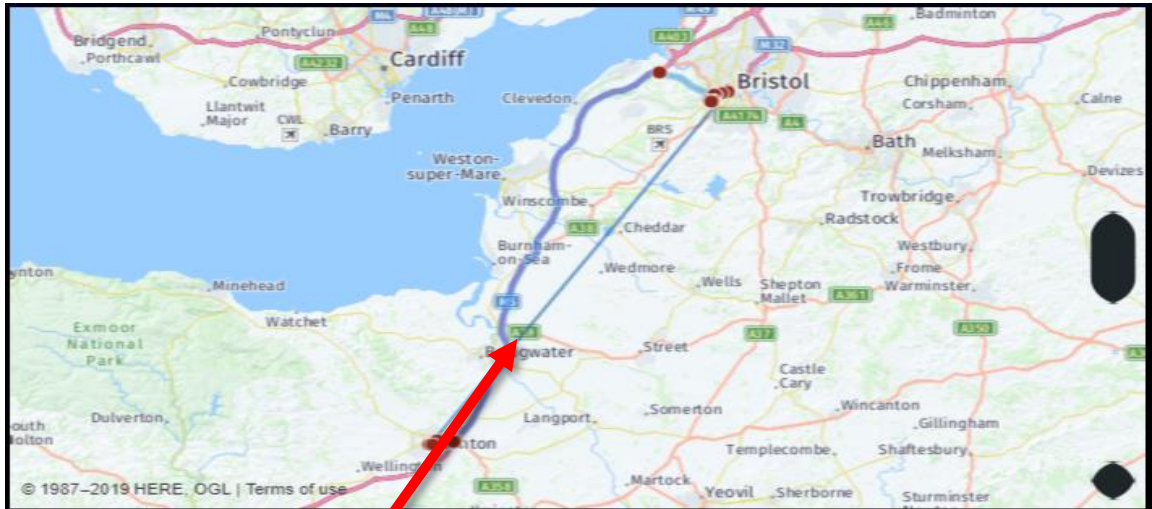
Wider community:

a strong visible presence, getting to know individuals and groups in the wider community, building relationships, coming alongside us in the ups and downs of life.

Here's what we are looking for

Skills to lead and complement our team	
Working collaboratively	Work closely and openly with Readers, churchwardens and PCCs as a mutually supportive leadership team. Value the experience and expertise of all in contributing to planning, decision making and the sharing of God's love in practice.
Worship	Confidently lead a broad variety of inclusive worship, adapting content and style for different audiences, occasions and purposes. Preaching and teaching that is inspiring, illuminating, relevant and based on the teachings of Jesus.
Communication	Proactive, engaging with confidence with a broad range of people from a variety of backgrounds in different community and church settings.
Leadership	A confident, reflective, collaborative leader, leading by example with integrity, creativity, resilience and clarity. A positive and optimistic approach rather than a puddleglum.
Relationships	Establish positive and effective relationships, managing challenges and building bridges.
Qualities	
Motivation	Have a true heart for people and a keen desire for them to experience the love of God in all its wonder in their lives.
Personal development and spirituality	Continue your own spiritual development, maintaining a prayerful life, seeking to model the love of God in action. Seeking spiritual guidance and mentorship. Recognise that you are on a life journey involving development of theological understanding and spiritual reflection. Take care of your own health, wellbeing and support needs, mindful of maintaining an effective work/life balance.
Make mistakes	Ability to take risks, explore, try new things, make and accept mistakes and learn from them together

Where we are



Road and rail links:

Our Benefice is less than 10 minutes from Junction 23 of the M5, off the A39 to Glastonbury and Wells.

Train Stations:

Bridgwater - 10 mins.

Taunton - 25 mins.

Places to visit

Coast: Burnham-On-Sea - 20 mins

Devon coast - 1 hour

Nature reserves: Steart Marshes;
Shapwick Heath;
Ham Wall – 20 mins.

City: Bristol - 40 mins

Quantock hills - 30 mins;

Exmoor - 1 hour 10 mins

Leisure activities

Easy walking and cycling: on the Somerset levels from your doorstep;
Sustrans national cycle route 3 runs through and links the three of the villages.



Your home

The Rectory is a large, well maintained detached home, situated in a quiet lane in Woolavington. It includes:

2 reception rooms, a study, kitchen; utility and loo downstairs

Master bedroom (en-suite),

2 large and 1 smaller double bedroom upstairs,

Family bathroom and separate loo.

Outside there is parking for several cars on the drive and a single garage. The wrap around garden includes a large shed in the south facing gardens.



Amenities:

Woolavington: GP Surgery, Pharmacy, Co-Op, convenience store, Post Office, fish and chip shop, playing field, children's playground and a hairdressing salon.

Bawdrip and Cossington: community orientated village pubs

Puriton: a village Pub, Butchers with General Store, Post Office and a hairdressing salon

Pawlett: Royal British Legion Club, Pavilion Sports and Social Centre and a hairdressing salon

Bridgwater, Street, Taunton & Bristol: a wide range of amenities

Nearest Schools and Colleges

Pre-School, Nursery and Primary Schools: Bawdrip, Pawlett, Puriton & Woolavington

Colleges & Secondary Schools: Bridgwater, Taunton, Highbridge and Street

Our Benefice

Churchwardens, Readers and priests

Our churchwardens in Bawdrip (l-r) Mike Murkin and Simon Peel



Our churchwardens in Cossington (l-r) Roy Turner and Jim Gane



Our churchwarden in Pawlett, Jane Wadsworth



Puriton – currently no churchwarden

Our Benefice

Our Readers & Woolavington Churchwarden

Trevor and Trish Lewis are hugely experienced Readers who preach and lead services across the Benefice. They are a phenomenon! They have built up strong links with the primary school in Woolavington and serve the churches and communities wholeheartedly, with a great sense of humour.

Trish is also the part time church administrator, churchwarden for Woolavington and the Benefice safeguarding officer.



Retired Priest



Rev Mary Clements

'I retired from parish ministry at the start of 2010 and moved to Woolavington. Since, I have primarily been a member of the congregation here enjoying the friendship offered. I also have permission to officiate in the diocese which gives me the opportunity to provide holiday cover in this benefice and elsewhere. I have been a member of the benefice ministry team and shared in leading worship and preaching in the benefice.'

Mary is a wise and wonderful gift to us.



Revd. Chris Keys.

Full time stipendiary Priest, Incumbent of Westonzoyland with Chedzoy. My current role is with Puriton and Pawlett supporting the parishes in their mission through the vacancy. Helping the parishes to look to the future. Developing links with Bawdrip, Woolavington and Cossington.

The churchwardens and those who lead worship seek to meet regularly with the incumbent, being integral to a supportive, open and effective leadership team.

In truth, we are all part of the ministry team in the Benefice!

The churches in our benefices – WCB

Woolavington: The Church of The Blessed Virgin Mary

Our Benefice

Cossington: The Church of The Blessed Virgin Mary

Bawdrip: The Church of St Michael And All Angels

These churches are all within a half hour's walking distance from each other.

They remain open during daylight hours and are collection points for the local foodbank.

All are Fairtrade churches.

Our approach to money is to ensure we raise the funds before committing to spending.

The churches in our benefices – P&P

Pawlett: The Church of St John the Baptist

Puriton : The Church of St Michael And All Angels

Community

Our community includes two established traveller sites, a large residential static caravan park and areas of significant need. There is also a transient population of Hinkley Point workers.

Our Benefice

Current pattern of worship

Sunday services - WCB

Sunday	Woolavington	Bawdrip	Cossington
First	9:30am Holy Communion	11:00am Holy Communion	11:00am Matins
Second	8am Holy Communion 9:30am All-Age Worship	6:30pm Evening Prayer/Evensong	11:00am Holy Communion
Third	9:30am All-Age Worship	11:00am Holy Communion	11:00am Songs of Praise
Fourth	4pm Church@4 Café Style Worship Alternates between Woolavington & Bawdrip		11:00am Holy communion
Fifth	United Benefice Communion Service Alternates between the churches		

Sunday services – P&P

Sunday	Pawlett	Puriton
First	8am Holy Communion 10am Morning Prayer	10am Holy Communion
Second	8am Holy Communion 10am Holy Communion	
Third	11am Worship at Pawlett Chapel	10am Holy Communion
Fourth	8am Holy Communion 10am Holy Communion	
Fifth	Joint Benefice Communion Service Alternates between the churches	

Midweek Services - WCB

Day of Week	Woolavington	Bawdrip	Cossington
Tuesday		7:15pm Pause for Thought	
Wednesday			9:30am Morning Prayer
Second Tuesday	10:00am Holy Communion		
Third Wednesday			10:00am Holy Communion

Our Benefice

Last Thursday	11:00am Holy Communion In Communal Hall		
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Midweek Services – P&P

Day of Week	Pawlett	Puriton
Wednesday	9.30am Holy Communion (BCP)	
Thursday		10am Holy Communion

Finance Summary (2018 figures) - WCB

Item	Woolavington	Bawdrip	Cossington
Parish Share	13,683	6,415	14,671
Income	24,443	11,756	18,287
Expenses	21,637	12,331	21,056
Unrestricted Balance	3,868	10,983	5,167
Restricted Balance	1,915	7,384	17,907

Finance Summary (2018 figures) – P&P

Item	Pawlett	Puriton
Parish Share	4,881 (agreed reduction to £500 pcm 2019)	4,800
Income	16,617	24,041
Expenses	24,668	18,063
Unrestricted Balance	11,250	12,759
Restricted Balance	63,351	11,326

Ecumenical Links

The four of the five churches are the only places of worship in their respective villages. Within Pawlett there is the Pawlett Methodist Church.

We have enjoyed participating in the annual ecumenical services.

Our Benefice

Exploration of faith



Coffee, chat and Bible – since 2017 this group has drawn participants from across the Benefice, meeting fortnightly, Friday daytime in Mary's home. The group began in response to a desire from people to learn more about the scriptures. It has grown, to the living room capacity of 13 people currently.

Home Group: This small monthly group met in the rectory and was led by the vicar. It arose from newly confirmed adults wishing to continue to explore and deepen their understanding together. They have tackled some contemporary topics and Bible studies.

Lent Course: This weekly group has taken different themes each year, including a film as a stimulus with supporting study guide.

Beacon: a monthly term time group of young people, led by the vicar, met for a year to December 2018. Activities included games, fun, discussion and prayer.

How do people know what is going on?

- ❖ The Link- a W, C & B Benefice magazine, 10 editions a year, delivered to approximately 800 homes. It includes a spiritual reflection and information about the churches; village events and news are shared, and local businesses advertised. New residents are welcomed with a copy of The Link.
- ❖ The Benefice website provides information about services and events.
- ❖ Facebook page: Woolavington, Cossington & Bawdrip churches public group - providing details of events and services.
- ❖ Bawdrip village website and community cafe
- ❖ Cossington parish council Facebook page.
- ❖ Church notice boards
- ❖ Parish Pump (W, C & B) – containing the week's readings; prayer; church events and next services - given out in church. Currently suspended.
- ❖ Puriton - notices are placed in a quarterly Parish Magazine distributed to all houses. Also on our Village Facebook page and church noticeboards.

We need to get better at

Updating and maintaining the benefice website; sharing The Link more consistently with new residents and posting church events on all the village websites.

W, C & B Benefice Survey

As part of trying to discern what we were seeking in a new vicar, the churchwardens and others involved in the recruitment process sent out a survey to the those living in the Benefice. We asked:

"As we are looking for a new vicar for our churches, we invite you to take a few minutes to tell us what you think is important about your church and what you would like to see happening in the next five years or so. We feel it is important to hear from everyone, not just church goers."

Surveys were anonymous; posted through doors; included in The Link magazine; handed out at village events; available on village websites and online. It stimulated discussion amongst neighbours and friends.

Responses:	Woolavington	50
	Cossington	33
	Bawdrip	27
	Total	111

Q: What do you believe are the community's most pressing needs?

The key themes that emerged:

Community: cohesion, inclusive, belonging, friendship

Community engagement: all age groups and men; providing facilities e.g. café/shop using church building; activities for everyone;

Community care: pastoral, the vulnerable and lonely.

Leadership: bringing community together; engaged in the community; and a vicar with high engagement in the community

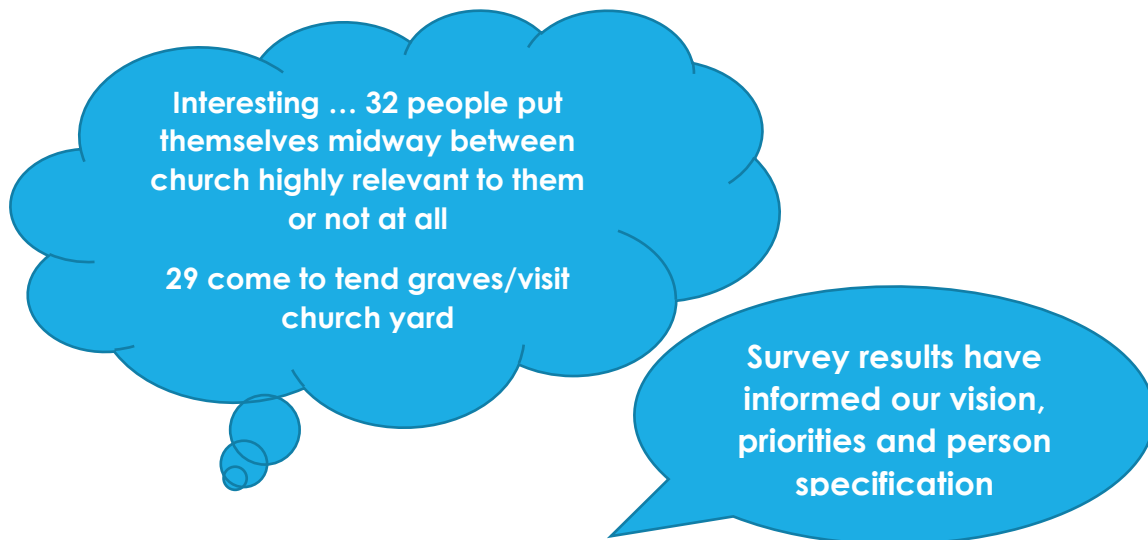
Q: What do you think could be done to make the church more relevant to you?

A vast range of responses. Looking at the word clouds across the villages the key words were, in no particular order: **friendly; village; community; vicar; love; worship.**

Q: What would you like to see happen in your church?

Responses to the question, strongly echoed the responses to the two other questions outlined above.

W, C & B Benefice Survey



What could we do better?

The survey findings gave us some clues...

We recognise that we also need to:

Work out how else may we effectively collaborate, coordinate and share together as a family of small village churches

Look at what obstacles stand in the way of engaging and being considered relevant for others. More consistent engagement in the wider community across the benefice

Building community cohesion where gaps exist

Enhancing and releasing the potential in our congregations

Bawdrip

Bawdrip is a village of 506 people [census 2011]; bordered by fields leading to the A39 on the north boundary and the King Sedgemoor Drain to the south. Sustrans National Cycle Path 3 passes along this waterway and links with Cossington. The church is in the centre of the village green, next to the village green.

The majority of houses in Bawdrip are clustered within the centre of the village. Kingsmoor primary school caters for 175 pupils and is located opposite the church. Bawdrip's friendly village pub is across the main road.

Whilst the population is mixed; the largest demographic is the 45 - 59 year range, with a high level of employment; 29% of households have children. A significant majority were born in the UK and 70% identify as Christian. [Census 2011]

Community life

Our parish hall serves the community, being the only venue for a variety of lively social and other events throughout the year. A sample month included 14 different types of event, accessed by 265 people. Church members are actively engaged in the range of groups and activities within the village.

Weekly groups include the craft and table tennis groups and monthly, the community café, led by volunteers, with profits benefitting the village. It links with community services and local events. It is currently promoting a recycling initiative for charity.

There is a strong community spirit in the village from which the church continues to benefit. The generosity of people who give their time and skills to carry out maintenance tasks; contribute to the past and planned parish hall refurbishment; manage its bookings; wind the clock; open the church and arrange flowers, extends far beyond the regular congregation and is something we appreciate hugely.



Jackie, artist, church treasurer

The same community spirit enabled the village History Group to lead in raising £7,000 last year to establish three heritage trails through the village which incorporate the church along the way.

Church Life

Church electoral roll: 21, up from 17 in 2018. Our declared membership for last year was 13. Our congregation is adult with children joining occasionally. Our PCC has 9 members plus two Readers.

Sunday morning and evening services: We appreciate an accessible, broad style of worship, ranging from traditional evensong, to Taizé style and other more modern styles, in order to draw a broad range of people closer to God. Church@4 services are 'café

Bawdrip

style,' starting with refreshments with an informal style of worship and simple accessible message.

Special Services coming up include a summer service on the village green; a Taizé service with cantor; an outdoor Remembrance Day Service; carols in the pub and Christmas Eve services. We value the contribution of musicians and others from the community at these events.



Pause for Thought is a mid-week 20-minute evening event in the north aisle, led by laity. It is informal and varied and includes prayer, music, worship, discussion or quiet reflection.

Community events: we host a variety of monthly events providing enjoyable social opportunities. Examples include: Cream teas on the green; Lammass Day bread making; a folk concert; barbeques; harvest lunch and scarecrow competition; a Good Friday village run/walk; a quiz night; a falafel and hummus making event with Syrian refugee friends.

Primary School links: The incumbent leads occasional assemblies; pupils have visited the church occasionally.

Fabric and buildings

The church is a fourteenth century cruciform church. The removal of pews from north aisle has provided a valuable flexible space.

Our works priorities stem from the Quinquennial Report (the report highlighted that the church is in generally good repair, but some costly work has been identified) and support for some refurbishment of the Parish Hall, with a community working party of volunteers. We have started grant applications and fund raising for our churchyard wall, engaging the expertise of one of our church warden's. We have secured £6,500 of the £16,500 needed to date and seek to achieve the remainder through further grant applications.



Lammass day Bread making

Cossington

Cossington's focal points include the Parish Church; The Bridge School; the playing field and playground, together with the village hall and the pub. A mobile greengrocer visits every Tuesday.

We have a veterinary practice and three working farms. Cossington is situated on Sustrans cycle route 3, following the disused railway line to Bawdrip.



The population of the village is 690 [2011 census, projected to 2017] and is down as follows: - Ages 0-17: 96 people; Ages 18-64: 362 people; Ages over 65: 232 people. Fifty new homes were added in 2011 and a traveller community resides on the outskirts of the village.

Community life

Cossington's excellent village hall is the venue for a variety of activities including concerts and sports. A Montessori nursery uses the hall, as well as groups such as 'Friends and Neighbours;' and our Parish Council.

The Red Tile Inn, our community orientated pub, hosts quiz nights and skittle teams.

Church Life

The church electoral roll currently stands at 49. We have an average congregation of 25, made up of predominantly retired people. Our PCC has 9 elected members.

Sunday services

We value a 'traditional' style of worship, with both traditional and modern hymns and we would like to maintain this broad-church style. Without a regular organist worship is accompanied by recorded music. Our monthly Matins is usually led by Benefice Readers and our Songs of Praise, by lay church members. We seek to encourage all ages, with a focus on making worship inclusive.

Midweek morning prayers are contemplative and monthly a 1662 Holy Communion Service is held. Services are well supported by a team of parishioners willing to contribute to the life of the church.

Our church and our community



Cossington residents love and cherish their church and in turn the church has a desire to serve. Our church keeps an

Cossington

open door during daylight hours, providing a quiet area for prayer.

The traveller community look to St Mary's at times of family milestone events. Bereaved families visit the churchyard daily, even years after the death of a loved one and some visit daily. There is a wealth of love and warmth in the church and village which is evident in every community event and St Mary's plays a major part.

The future

Being a forward-thinking church, we have initiated a re-ordering group of PCC and non-church goers looking into possible future use of our church building as a way of serving the community whilst maintaining its primary function as a place of worship. We seek to have a broader outlook, to be a visible and distinct group, reaching out to the wider community – both spiritually and practically. There is also a desire to be sustainable in every



way and to promote ethical values.

Events

Our Events Committee includes members of the PCC and other willing volunteers. This group organises an annual programme of social and fund-

raising events which not only keep us financially healthy but also helps to maintain our community profile. We hold a charity coffee morning every week.

We are grateful to many willing volunteers (not necessarily members of the congregation). We acknowledge this support with an annual service of thanksgiving.



Joyce 91 polishes the brass. As a child she went on the Jarrow Marches with her dad who took his cobbling tools to make shoes for the bare footed.

Buildings and Fabric

Our church of St. Mary the Virgin is believed to be an outpost on the Polden Hills from the nearby Glastonbury Abbey before the Dissolution.

St Mary's dates from the 13th century and consists of a two - cell church with south porch and a 15th century tower. There is a peal of six bells.

The building is in an excellent state of repair and the latest inspection report identified only minor defects.

Pawlett

Pawlett is a middle-sized village within the benefice with a population of around 1400 people. Just off the A38 it is situated near the Pawlett Hams and the River Parrett and comprises a mixture of old and new houses, farms and farmland and a wide demographic spread including many old village families.

Amenities: Pawlett recently lost its only village shop and Post Office, but the community centres around our thriving Royal British Legion Club, Pavilion Sports and Social Centre and busy Village Hall. There is also a Methodist Chapel and Hall. There are two play areas with modern equipment, on the village green and at the Pavilion. A regular bus service runs between Burnham on Sea, Bridgwater and Taunton and we are less than five minutes' drive from the M5 Motorway.



There is also a hairdressing salon. The Academy Primary School has a long and close association with the Church and a Pre-school Playgroup meets in the Methodist Church Schoolroom.

Community Life: Pawlett is a village that is particularly good at “coming together” and there is a Venn Diagram of societies and groups who regularly unite to organise and run village events with whom we work closely; we are blessed with many

active and willing volunteers. The Church does not have its own hall but is next to a well-equipped and modern Village Hall adjacent to the village green which hosts many regular activities. These include line dancing, short mat bowls, bridge and whist clubs, art classes and life drawing. There are also annual flower and produce shows, art exhibitions, quizzes and village events such as the Harvest Supper, Carol Singing around the Tree, Christmas Tea and Village Fete. Pawlett has an active branch of the Royal British Legion including a Women's Section who are closely associated with the Church and have their own Garden of Remembrance in the Churchyard. There is an active branch of the Women's Institute. There is also a particularly well-used and lively village group on Social Media – Pawlett Village Life – which disseminates information throughout the village and beyond including news of the Church and its services.

Church Life: Our PCC has seven elected members, one Churchwarden and two of our members are elected as Deanery Synod Representatives and regularly attend meetings. The six PCC meetings during the year and APCM are chaired by our incumbent. We currently have 32 on our electoral roll and a weekly average congregation of 18 – sadly there are no children who attend regularly. We have an organised team of flower arrangers, cleaners, readers for services, refreshments after the service, vergers and sidespersons, and a volunteer who ensures we have a Union or St George's Flag flying from the tower on appropriate occasions. In

Pawlett

June we hold a cream tea in the village hall to mark the Patronal



Festival of St John the Baptist

In 2017 a long-awaited covenant was signed with our friends at Pawlett Methodist Church with

whom we have a close association. "Pawlett Churches Together" meets twice a year to explore opportunities for mission and outreach. There is a joint prayer group that meets regularly and a lent group and bible study group. Our annual austerity lunch is always well attended and raises significant amounts of money for local charities.

There is a close relationship with the Church of St Michael and All Angels in Puriton having been in a joint benefice with them for 46 years. There is a joint benefice service when there is a fifth Sunday in the month.

Current Sunday worship is Morning Prayer on the first Sunday; 10am Holy Communion on second and fourth Sundays. On the third Sunday we join our Methodist friends at Pawlett Chapel for their 11am service.

Music and Bells: We have a dedicated team of bellringers to call people to worship with our six bells. Music plays an integral part of our life and worship at St John the Baptist Church. We are blessed with two inspirational and experienced organists and choirmasters and a small but committed choir, often augmented by

members from the Puriton congregation.

Special services: Special services include one outdoors for pets in the summer, a Christingle, the school end-of-term services and a crib service. We hold a service on Ash Wednesday and

one on Maundy Thursday and observe the Last Hour following a Walk of Witness. The Royal British Legion conducts the annual Service of Remembrance which is always well attended.



Pawlett Primary School Academy:

Recently described as one of "Britain's most picturesque Schools" we have a close association with this small village school of 64 pupils encouraged by their dynamic new head and going back many years. She is justifiably proud that the whole of this year's intake in September will be from the village. Apart from special services held in the Church for Easter, Harvest and Christmas, Pawlett Churches Together initiated "Messy Church after school Club" which is now in its third successful year with a regular attendance of up to twenty children (a third of the school). It has proved a valuable and rewarding experience for all involved and a vital part of mission and outreach.

Pawlett

The Church Building: Grade I and over 1000 years old, Sir John Betjeman gave St John the Baptist "five stars" but to the people of Pawlett it's the heart of our



village and more than just a building. It is well maintained and all works recommended in our Quinquennial report are carried out. The pews are exceptional examples of Jacobean carpentry and we have a Hill, single manual organ which is in good working order and used every week. There is a new and efficient boiler, installed in 2019 and there is a working party planning and organising the building of a much-needed WC and small servery to make the Church a more flexible space – perhaps for the next 1000 years.

The Churchyard: The Churchyard is a valuable village amenity with a right-of-way that is used every day by walkers and dog-walkers and people visiting loved-ones' graves. Working party "blitzes" are held monthly and are reliably supported by a number of regular helpers from the Church and wider community and it is well maintained to a very high standard. The Royal British Legion has established a Garden of Remembrance which has brought further benefits of co-operation and association as they join us for these blitzes.

Puriton

Puriton has grown considerably in recent years and with the smaller communities of Dunball and Downend has a population in excess of 2,000. The main centre for this group is Puriton with large housing estates, shops, a sports centre and community halls.

The M5 with junction 23 and the railway both run to the west of the village, beyond is Downend, a small residential area and further west is Dunball this is quite different with fewer houses but numerous industrial and servicing units.

Current development includes establishing an Energy Park on the former Royal Ordnance Factory, potentially employing 4,000 workers - a new road by-passing the village is being built as part of this scheme. Planned developments includes a proposed housing estate of 120 homes to the east of Puriton and a considerable increase in commercial units at Dunball.

Amenities: The village benefits from a Village Pub, Primary School, Nursery, Pre- School, Butchers with General Store, Post Office and a Hairdresser. A visiting Fish and Chip van is well supported.



The community has a number of

meeting venues - the Village Hall, Church Hall, Sports Centre and the Pub. There are three play areas, one beside the Village Hall and the others close to housing estates in the village centre. There is a limited bus service running through Puriton from Bridgwater to Wells. A more frequent Taunton to Burnham bus service is provided for Dunball and Downend residents.

Community Life: There are various groups organising activities in the village, which are held in the Village Hall, Church Hall, Pub and Sports Centre. These cover a wide range of activities, such as bingo, cards, craft group, sewing and keep fit at various levels.



The Sports Centre provides exercise classes, Bowls, Archery and facilities for field sports.

The village housing consists of a varied mix from large detached to bungalows, to share-buy and social housing.

Church Life: We are fortunate to have the assistance of Rev. Chris Keys during the vacancy. We have a small team of Bell Ringers and an Organist (from Pawlett), a sound system is available if required. There are rotas of volunteers for Flower Arranging, Brass Cleaning,

Puriton

Welcoming, Reading in services, Refreshments, operating the sound system and maintaining the churchyard.

We have 27 on our Church electoral roll. The congregation, averaging between 15 and 20, is mostly comprised of older people but some younger families are part of our Church and attend on occasion.

Our PCC: Currently, in the absence of a Churchwarden, the PCC is chaired by our PCC Secretary. It has nine members and normally meets bi-monthly.

Sunday services: Parish Communion (with the Sunday School) is held on the first Sunday in the month. Said Communion is held on the third Sunday. A joint service with Pawlett is held on the fifth Sunday alternating between the Parishes.



A Weekday service which was held on Thursday morning is currently suspended. However, Communion is offered at the Tuesday Coffee Stop once a month.

Our Church welcomes families for Weddings, Funerals and Baptisms, the latter being carried out both in Sunday services and at other times to suit the families.

Community events: Weekly Tuesday Coffee Mornings are held in the

Church Hall. Various fund-raising events are organised for the community across the village, Christmas Concerts etc. These take place in the Church, Village Hall and Sports Centre.



Primary School links: Close links have been built up by previous incumbents and are currently being maintained by Rev Chris Keys. There are special services in Church for

the school children at times such as Harvest and Christmas.

Sunday School: We have a small active group who meet regularly in the Church Hall and attend part of the Parish Communion service on the first Sunday of each month.

Fabric and building: The Church is a Grade 1 listed building. Our Tower requires repointing, approval has been given for work to proceed once finance is in place. Elsewhere, only minor items were identified in our recent survey and these have since been addressed.

Our Church Hall has undergone a lot of maintenance in recent years with a new roof and kitchen, redecorating throughout and resurfacing the driveway.

Woolavington

Woolavington is the largest of the three villages within the WCB Benefice and is where the rectory is sited. The population is currently in the region of 2,000. However, there is the possibility of considerable growth in the next few years with three planning applications which, if passed, could create up to 500 new houses.

Amenities

The village benefits from a primary school with nursery; two shops; one of which includes a post office; a doctors' surgery; a pharmacy and a fish and chip shop. The community police hub is in the village hall, one of three community venues – the others being the council owned Bitham Walk Hall and the sports pavilion. There are two play areas, one beside the village hall and the other adjacent to the sports field. There is a limited bus service running through the villages from Bridgwater to Wells.



Community Life

There are various groups organising activities in the village, which are mostly, but not exclusively, held in the village hall. These cover a wide range of activities, such as art classes, bingo,

bridge, craft, sewing, keep fit at various levels, cardiac rehab, hand bells and Scottish dancing.

There are also friendship groups for all ages ranging from toddler group and Flare, the local Youth Group, to coffee mornings, Women's Institute and Afternoon Group. The village hall accommodates a community run lending library.

At the top of our village there are approximately 225 houses. Originally built for local workers, the houses and bungalows now include a high proportion of social housing and deprivation among the vulnerable groups. This constitutes a Magnificat parish ref: Bath&Wells Manna, issue 34.

Church Life

We are fortunate to have a retired priest living in the village and a husband and wife team of lay readers.

We have a team of bell ringers and two organists who play regularly each week with piano and guitar used for more informal all age worship.

There are rotas of volunteers for flower arranging, brass cleaning, welcoming, intercessions, reading in services, refreshments, operating the sound system and delivering the Link magazine. We have a dedicated team of volunteers who distribute and collect envelopes during Christian Aid week.

We have 39 on our church electoral roll. The congregation, averaging between 15 and 20, is mostly comprised of older people but some younger families are part of our church family and attend on occasion.

Woolavington

Our PCC

Currently this is chaired by our only churchwarden. It has ten members.

Sunday services are Holy Communion and more informal all age worship and informal church@4.

Week day services There are two weekday communion services in the month, one on the second Tuesday in church and the other held at the Bitham Walk hall on the fourth Thursday, mostly attended by the elderly living nearby.

Home groups Two home groups meet regularly for Bible study.

Naturally the church welcomes families for weddings, funerals and baptisms, the latter being carried out both in Sunday services and at other times to suit the families.



Community events

Weekly Wednesday coffee mornings are held in church. Various fun(d) raising events are organised for the community across the village, Christmas Fayre, Christmas treat, Harvest Tea, carol singing, concerts etc. These take place in the church, village hall and Bitham Walk hall. The annual Abseil event is particularly well attended by the villagers. Some church

members offer their homes for coffee mornings.



Primary School links Close links have been built up by previous incumbents and are currently maintained by our lay readers who regularly take assemblies. There are special services in church for the school children at times such as Harvest and Christmas. Recently Bishop Peter visited, and the children were able to ask him questions.

Fabric and building The church is a grade 1 listed building. Having recently had work carried out, the church is in a good state of repair. Pews have been replaced with comfortable chairs providing a flexible space which can be used for community events. There is also a kitchen area, disabled access and toilet.



Archdeacon and Sedgemoor deanery



Our vision

In response to God's immense love for us we seek to be God's people

living and telling the story of Jesus.

Our vision speaks of the story of Jesus; his life, teaching and work, his death and resurrection; the story which is the context of our faith and the content of our message.

We seek to live this story as disciples of Jesus Christ in the world and to tell it, both in sharing the good news and by the way in which our lives speak about Him.

The diocesan strategy is built around three priorities:

1. To place mission and evangelism at the heart of all we do.
2. To re-align our resources towards mission.
3. To identify, develop and release the gifts of all our people.

The priorities provide a framework for decision-making and planning at parish, benefice, deanery, archdeaconry and diocesan levels.

Sedgemoor Deanery

The people, parishes and chaplaincies that make up Sedgemoor Deanery are seeking to take seriously the diocesan vision to live and tell the story of Jesus. Like the diocesan priorities we aim to put mission and evangelism at the heart of all we do, realign our ministry resources towards mission and, in all these things seek to identify, develop and use the gifts of all people. With information provided by all the parishes we created a mission action plan in September 2018. This has identified particular things for our deanery focus:

- 1) to provide opportunities for regular prayer together (which includes our ecumenical partners).
- 2) to look at ways that we may be able to respond more effectively at deanery level with regards to ministry to men and to youth & children.
- 3) to offer deanery wide opportunities for training, e.g. lay worship assistant courses.

In order to move forward with our MAP we have re-imagined deanery synod. Each meeting is now café style and is open to all in the deanery (who have an interest in

Archdeacon and Sedgemoor deanery

the subject being discussed). We try to have plenty of time to share good ideas, learn from each other and for those present to feed ideas to the Deanery Mission and Pastoral Group. The DMPG is made up of lay and ordained people from across the deanery. They plan the synods and are working on the next MAP.

We are also blessed to have a full-time Deanery Mission Enabler (DME) working alongside us. We very much wish for incumbents, PCCs and congregations to take advantage of this resource that we have and to engage with the work of the DME in the deanery.

Our clergy chapter meet 6 times a year over lunch and is a very supportive group of colleagues. We share news, ideas, issues and pray for each other. We are always joined by the Lay Dean whose wisdom we value. It is also an important demonstration of the equal value of all God's people, both lay and ordained.

Mrs Katherine Cannell (Lay Dean) & Revd Prebendary Jane Haslam (Area Dean)

Contacts and links

Contacts	<p>For any queries regarding the vacancy: Mike Murkin, Churchwarden, Bawdrip T: 01278 686278 M: 07754 517618 E: mike.murkin@gmail.com</p>
Useful Links	<p>Benefice: http://www.wcbchurches.org.uk/benefice-of-woolavington-with-cossington-bawdrip/</p> <p>Diocese: www.bathandwells.org.uk</p> <p>Village websites: https://www.bawdrip.org.uk/ http://cossingtonvillagehall.org.uk/ http://www.cossingtonparishcouncil.org.uk/ https://www.pawlettparish.org/ https://puritonparishcouncil.org/ https://www.woolavingtonvillagehall.co.uk/ https://www.woolavington-parishcouncil.co.uk/</p> <p>For the Parish spotlights and dashboards please see the Bath & Wells website.</p>

What an opportunity!

Together, with God we can

“Live and journey together, striving to be the body of Christ in our villages”



Is God calling you to us?

Are you our 'priest of the people'?

Father, make clear your voice in the midst of the clamour,
conceive in us a fresh growing of love
and nourish it within our being so that it comes forth in freedom.

Our Benefice in pictures

