

House for Duty Incumbent

PROFILE OF THE PARISH OF

# BANBURY SAINT LEONARD



To be a Christian presence in the community,  
embodying God's love in all we say and do.

February 2022

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



## Foreword by the Archdeacon of Dorchester



A warm welcome to this Parish Profile for St Leonard's Church in Banbury.

Thank you for your interest in this post, which is a town-based ministry in one of the poorer parts of Banbury. The Church here is warm and friendly and has consistently reached out to all parts of this diverse community, including the school, ecumenical partners, and those of different faiths and ethnic backgrounds. You will find plenty of information in this profile about the parish, its people and the church that serves the community here.

This is an ideal opportunity for a fulfilling ministry that seeks to encourage, enable and reinvigorate the church's life, ministry and mission after the last two years of the pandemic and the death in post of the previous incumbent. There are good links to build on, much to celebrate and some key areas to work on together with the PCC and the congregation. The liturgical life of the parish and music in worship are important and will need someone with spiritual depth, who can be both pastorally sensitive and liturgically able. The parish has done some helpful reflecting on the opportunities and challenges here and seeks a collaborative leader to help them take their vision forward. This is a House for Duty post, enabling a ministry of 2 days plus Sundays each week, so there is a need for the new incumbent to be able to manage their time and life/work balance well.

As a diocese, we are seeking to become more Christ-like for the sake of God's world and learning to be contemplative, compassionate and courageous in all we do. Anyone taking on this post will I hope wish to engage with our vision as it continues to develop, particularly in terms of how it might help the mission and outreach in this parish. Our priorities include addressing poverty and inequality, environmental action, Christian formation and discipleship, and engaging with schools, children and young people. You can [find out more](#) on the diocesan website and the diocese is blessed to have a great team who are keen to support parishes in their mission.

If you would like to have a conversation about the post, please feel free to contact me ([archdeacon.dorchester@oxford.anglican.org](mailto:archdeacon.dorchester@oxford.anglican.org) or 01865 208245).

With every blessing as you seek to discern whether God might be calling you to serve here.



The Venerable Judy French, Archdeacon of Dorchester

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### Appendix 1

## 1.0 Banbury



Banbury Cross



Banbury Town Hall



Former Museum



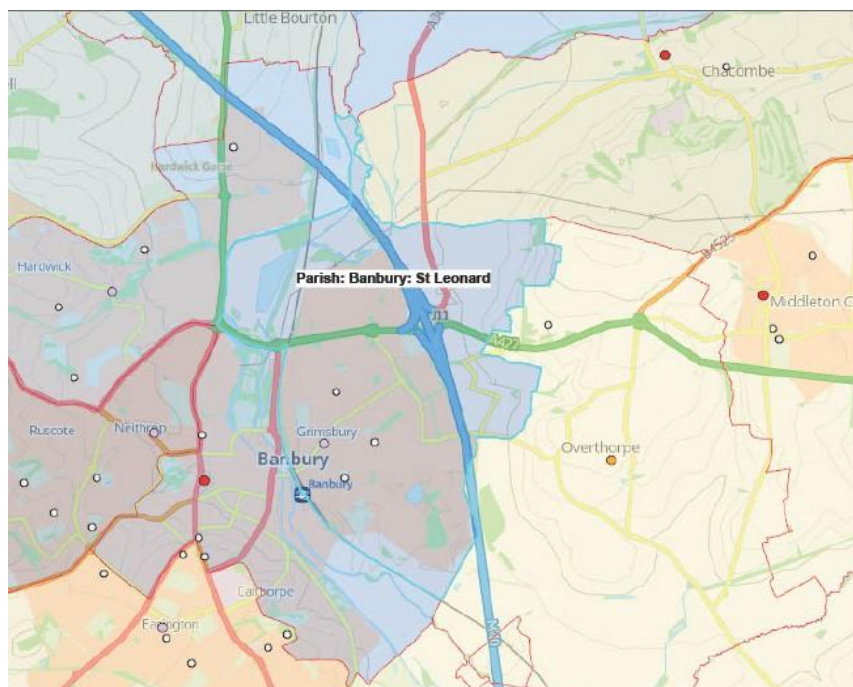
New canalside museum

## 1.1 Location

The nursery rhyme, Ride a Cock Horse, has made Banbury one of the best known towns in England. Today Banbury is an expanding market and industrial town.

Conveniently located off junction 11 of the M40 and boasting excellent railway and motorway links, its rich historic background combines excellent facilities with an attractive standard of living. Oxford is just 23 miles away and London Marylebone 60 minutes by train. Although Banbury is a growing and ever-changing town, the countryside around is beautifully unspoiled and well within walking distance.

The parish of Grimsbury, where St. Leonard's is located, is one of the poorer areas of the town containing a large number of bed-sits and terraced homes. In recent years three new private housing estates have been built providing one bed starter homes to 4 and 5 bedroom detached properties. There is, therefore, a great diversity of people living in this parish from young singles, young and growing families, to the elderly and ethnic minorities, and immigrant workers from Eastern Europe.



## 1.2 Education

Saint Leonard's Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School (<https://st-leonards.oxon.sch.uk>) is just a 5 minute walk away. This school has around 367 pupils of mixed faith and ability, with around one quarter of the pupils Punjabi and Urdu speaking and learning English as a second language. The school was most recently rated as Good overall by Ofsted, and Good by the Church of England/The National Society.

There are places for three Foundation Governors, formerly including the vicar of St. Leonard's, to play an active role in the life of the school. Both the school and PCC would like the new incumbent to serve on the Governing Body, but as a minimum, would expect enthusiastic participation in school life.

Dashwood Banbury Academy (<https://www.dashwood-aspirations.org>) was built in 2008 on the old cattle market site and will present an additional challenge to the parish.

Elsewhere in the town, secondary school provision comprises North Oxfordshire Academy (NOA), Wykham Park Academy, The Futures Institute, and The Warriner School, as well as Frank Wise School (Special). Banbury also has a number of faith schools, two of which also serve the parish, including St. Johns R.C. Primary and Blessed George Napier Secondary. There are also a number of private schools locally. At further education level, Banbury and Bicester College is located near the town centre.

There is a range of local nursery school provision within the town, including East Street Centre within the parish.

There are several universities within commuting distance including in Oxford, Warwick, Coventry and London.

## 1.3 Health Care

There are a number of doctors surgeries both in and around the town centre, with one located in Grimsbury itself. All dental surgeries are in the town centre (a 10 minute walk) with some of them still taking NHS patients. The Horton General Hospital, part of the Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, is located on the south side of town. The hospital has a 24-hour accident and emergency department and maternity unit. The Foscote private hospital is adjacent to the Horton. More specialist care is provided by other trust hospitals within Oxford.

## 1.4 Shopping and Leisure

Banbury town centre has undergone substantial redevelopment recently, around the Castle Quay shopping centre, and this had added a second cinema to the town, as well as a new hotel.



There are many public houses, fine restaurants and coffee shops, as well as a growing number of independent shops. The town also has a museum, bowling alley, sports centre, library, football stadium, cricket and bowls clubs and golf courses located nearby. There are also several parks and green spaces around the town.

A street market is held on Thursdays and Saturdays, with a farmers market being

held on the first Friday of the month selling locally grown produce.

Tesco, Morrison, Sainsbury, Waitrose, Lidl and Aldi supermarkets are all conveniently located around the town. There are a number of independent shops in the town centre, and two retail parks offering a wide variety of shops.

The Mill Arts Centre provides local theatre, arts and cultural activities for all age groups. National theatre companies can be found in Oxford and Stratford-on-Avon.

Add an annual Michaelmas fair, and Banbury has all the activities, facilities and entertainment expected of a lively and prosperous market town.



Banbury is well served by a network of canal towpaths, bridleways, footpaths and cycle paths to places of interest located nearby. Many beautiful historic houses and gardens surround Banbury, and during the summer months several festivals take place nearby, including the Cropredy Fairport Convention.



For the more adventurous there is sailing on Grimsbury Reservoir.



Nearby Oxford and Milton Keynes provide opportunities to ice skate and snow ski.

## 1.5 Local Economy

Major employers in the area include Douwe Egbert, Amazon, and DHL. Motor sport is another significant employer: Prodrive, Aston Martin Racing, Haas F1 team, Arden International, and Mahindra Racing are all based in Banbury.

Increasingly Banbury is becoming a commuter town for London and its location adjacent to the M40 has attracted large distribution centres.

## 2.0 Demography

### 2.1 Local Statistics

The latest available figures in the “Local Insight Profile” indicate that the population of Banbury is approximately 65,000. The population of Grimsbury is about 10,000. It was estimated recently that 52% of people aged 16-74 are in full time employment, compared to the national average of 39%.

Over 10% of the population identified themselves as “white non British”. This is double the national average figure, and includes many Polish and Romanian workers. Almost 20% of the population were born outside the UK, and over 8% of households were reported to have no members with English as their main language.

55% declared themselves Christian followed by 27% no religion, and over 8% Muslim.

According to the 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation, parts of Grimsbury are ranked amongst the most deprived 20% of neighbourhoods in England.

Crime statistics are below the national average in Banbury

## 2.2 Housing

Grimsbury was originally built as an overspill area for local railway workers and mainly consisted of terraced housing, with council housing added between the wars. With the railways selling off land, new developments of mixed town houses and detached houses have been built. The Banbury cattle market closed around 2000, and the site was developed to provide new homes and the relocated primary school Dashwood Banbury Academy, all within a 5 minute walk of the church.

According to figures for 2021 from Rightmove, the average price of a semi detached house in Banbury was around £265,000. Terraced houses and detached houses averaged about £234,000 and £387,000 respectively.

## 3.0 Banbury St. Leonard's Parish

### 3.1 Buildings and Land

Saint Leonard's Church was built in Grimsbury, the East side of Banbury town, in 1891. It was originally built as a Chapel of Ease to Christ Church in Broad Street.

In 1921 Grimsbury was constituted as a separate parish and Saint Leonard's became the parish church of Saint Leonard's Grimsbury. In 1931 a fire destroyed much of the South side of the church and as a result, the church was redecorated and a new vestry was built. In 1978 the newly created Parish of Banbury, made up of four districts, was inaugurated.

In 1998 the Banbury Team Ministry was dissolved. By Royal assent the new parish of Banbury Saint Leonard was created.

In 2001 a new dais was built in the nave of the church and the High Altar was placed in the centre. The font was also moved from the South Aisle and placed in the nave at the West end of the church.

In 2003 the church underwent a 'makeover' with the central pillars being painted to reflect the decoration of the ceiling which is believed to have been designed in the style of a canal boat. (The canal runs nearby).



The church nave seats 120 with the lady Chapel seating another 25. Individual upholstered chairs have recently been purchased to replace groups of attached wooden chairs, in order to improve flexibility when the church is used for social activities.

In 2019 the rear of the church had a kitchen area built to allow the nave to double as a social area, and an accessible toilet was built in part of the foyer.

The church hall, which was built in 1976, has now come to the end of its useful life. In the long term, the PCC would like to demolish the hall and develop a car park in the area, as we now have new facilities within the church itself.

### 3.2 The Vicarage

St Leonards new Vicarage was built in 2015 and is a very spacious, well designed family property hidden away next to Leonards Church on the Middleton Road. There is a long driveway, with parking area for several vehicles. The accommodation comprises entrance hall, a light and airy kitchen, separate utility area, large dining room/second reception room large dual aspect lounge and office. Upstairs are four good sized bedrooms, some with built in wardrobes, and two bathrooms.



### 3.3 Other Christian Churches in St Leonards Parish.

Grimsbury has other Christian churches within the parish boundary; nearby is Grimsbury Methodist Church, West Street, which shares its building with the Redeemed Christian Church of God. Over recent years there have been strong ties between these two churches and St. Leonard's, with occasional ecumenical services.

### 3.4 Other Christian churches in and around Banbury

St. Leonard's is in the Deddington Deanery, which comprises 12 benefices. Other C of E churches in Banbury include St. Mary, St Paul, St. Francis and St. Hugh. There are 29 other churches in the various benefices making up Deddington Deanery.

There are two Roman Catholic churches and several independent churches in the town.

### 3.5 Other faith communities

Grimsbury has a large Asian community consisting of Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs. Banbury Madni Masjid Mosque is located in Grimsbury, as is Banbury Gudwara. There is enormous opportunity to establish beneficial links with these faith communities.

## 4.0 The community of St. Leonard's

### 4.1 Overview

St. Leonard's has a friendly and dedicated congregation with a distinctively high Church tradition.

There is a mix of age and background, and there are some young families but the greater proportion are people in middle to old age. The diversity of our congregation is increasing, and we continue to attract worshippers from outside our parish boundaries.

Before Covid we enjoyed an active social scene within the church consisting of quiz nights with suppers, dances, and coffee mornings.



## 4.2 Electoral Roll

The electoral roll currently stands at 37. Average Sunday attendance is about 35.

### **4.3 Worship**

The style of worship at Saint Leonard's is traditional and liturgical. Ritual is important with Sanctus bells weekly and with incense on major Holy days.

The main service is held at 10.00am on a Sunday and prior to covid the choir sang the Eucharist. Currently we hold prayer meetings in church on Wednesday and Saturday. Before the interregnum, a eucharist service was held on Wednesdays.

Christmas services have included a children's Crib Service, Carols by Candlelight and Midnight Mass. Easter services include Maundy Thursday Eucharist, ecumenical Stations of the Cross, and a Good Friday vigil.

During the restrictions that Covid imposed on the congregation, we maintained services via zoom. During the interregnum, the zooming of services ceased, and in-person services resumed in church. We are planning to start zooming live services where possible in the near future.

### **4.4 Communion outside of church**

Regrettably, because of covid and for other reasons, we currently can't offer home community or communion at the local care home. Given the right circumstances we hope to resume this part of our pastoral care.

### **4.5 Family and children work**

Before Covid, children were catered for in the following ways on Sundays: under 3's could take busy bags to their seats, there was a play area for 3 - 6 year olds, and older children had activities with a link to the service. We hope to reinstate some or all of this provision. When required we have also held pre-confirmation classes, together with workshops for parents on faith development.

### **4.6 Service Books**

All our worship is based on Common Worship.

### **4.7 Choir**

We plan to restart the Choir in 2022, subject to the Covid situation. The choir sings at the Sunday morning service and at weddings, when requested. They sing psalms and anthems, and occasionally perform at the Ridings Care home.

We have a rota of volunteer organists and pianists as our music is extremely important to us. Whilst we are not seeking a classically trained musician, we would like the future incumbent to support and encourage the music of the church.

## 4.8 Lay participation

Many people take an active part in the worship at St Leonard's. At the main Sunday Eucharist the team might include an MC, Thurifer, Crucifer, two Acolytes, Verger, Sides-people, Readers and Intercessors.

Other duties performed by church members include Sacristan, refreshments, flower arranging, cleaning and gardening.

## 4.9 Finances and weekly giving

Finances are tight, and historically St Leonard's has been unable to meet its full Parish Share. Regular giving and collections make up approximately 85% of the church's income, and we are working hard to encourage greater giving by individuals. The balance of our income comes mainly from funerals, social events, the Christmas bazaar and the summer fete.

## 4.10 PCC

St Leonard's PCC is made up of two churchwardens, one Deanery Synod Representatives, the treasurer, and six other members of the laity, together with the incumbent. They meet as required. Separately, there is a Ministry Team that meets as necessary. (see appendix 1)

## 4.11 Charity Giving

As a Church we regularly support Oxfordshire Historic Churches, the Children's Society, the local Food bank, Care Home, British Legion and each Christmas we adopt a charity.

## 4.12 Baptisms, Weddings & funerals

At St. Leonard's we do approximately six baptisms within or after the main Sunday service and one or two weddings a year. Around ten Anglican funerals take place each year within the parish, of which most are conducted at the crematorium, with a few taking place in church.

## 4.13 Bible Study

Every year we have a Lent and Advent bible study. Every month we have a bible study and are planning in the new year to start a Living in Love and Faith course. During covid these continued online.

## 4.14 Quiet Days

We run several quiet days a year which offer an opportunity for prayer and reflection within our busy lives.

## 4.15 Other Activities in Church.

There is a weekly morning exercise class followed by a social lunch (when this can resume). We plan to add an afternoon session soon.

An Art group meets weekly at various venues.

Another group, 'It's Good to Talk', started in September 2021, and follows the NHS guide lines on wellbeing.

Currently we are in discussions with Age Concern about hosting their bereavement group; this is likely to start after Easter.

## 4.16 The Ridings

The Ridings Care home lies within the parish, and St. Leonard's has had close connections with residents for some considerable time. A communion service was held on a monthly basis, with the choir visiting on several other occasions. Currently we offer a weekly seated exercise class, a weekly bible/prayer session and a weekly poetry club. Some contact was maintained during covid lock down via zoom.

## 4.17 Schools

The previous incumbent worked to establish closer contacts with St Leonard's C of E School, and she also served as a school governor. Regular assemblies were held, and a permanent prayer space was established together with a weekly after school weekly Christian club. Several members of the congregation have helped with these activities in the past. The school still makes regular visits to the church mid-week for various services and sometimes attend midweek communion. Contact with the second school within the parish boundaries, Dashwood Banbury Academy, has continued to improve with occasional invitations to RE lessons and assemblies.

## 4.18 The Sunrise Multi-Cultural Project

The Sunrise Multi-Cultural was started in the Grimsbury parish, and the church was involved from the beginning. Although the headquarters is no longer based in Grimsbury, the church has maintained contact through the Asian ladies' group.

## 4.19 Banbury Christians Together

Banbury Christians Together is a group of local churches who meet once a month to support each other, and includes a representative from St. Leonard's.

## 4.20 Grimsbury Community

Grimsbury Community has two organisations which bring all residents together. Grimsbury Community Network, which is supported financially by the local council, produces a newsletter several times a year, and organises activities with community groups such as summer play days. The local residents run the Grimsbury Community Association, who manage the local Community Hall.

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## 5.0 Vision and Mission statement

### Vision

Our current vision is to create a caring, sustainable and growing Christian presence within our parish. Our mission is to seek to be a Christian presence in the community, embodying God's love in all we say and do. Everyone is welcome.

Growing together as an inclusive church family of God, living and sharing His love in the community.

We recognise that we need to work at growing our congregation while also growing in our individual faith, and to be proactive in the community.

### DEVELOPING OUR Mission

In November 2021 members of the congregation met with Charles Chadwick, Parish Development Advisor to talk about the current life of St. Leonards and the way we would like this to develop in the future. It was at this meeting that we considered how we would describe ourselves and came up with the following list:

- Traditional.
- Welcoming.
- Musical
- Convivial.
- Family.
- Teamwork.
- An older congregation.
- Some school involvement.
- Welcoming.
- Friendly
- Inclusive.
- Small.
- Encouraging.
- Open minded.
- Hospitality in all its aspects

## 6.0 Opportunities and challenges

We, the congregation then looked at what might be the opportunities and challenges for us:

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Work with schools – Saint Leonard's C of E School and Dashwood Banbury Academy.
- Ministry at the Ridings Care Home.
- Wellbeing work.
- Volunteers and commitment.
- Reinvigorate the choir.
- Restart activities for children.
- Hospitality.
- Work with schools and families.
- Form links with other religious and community groups.

### CHALLENGES

- Financial position.
- Building maintenance.
- Decommissioning the hall.
- Addressing the lack of parking.
- Redeveloping the social aspect of church post covid.

To conclude that meeting, we thought about the key areas for our next vicar to consider:

- Developing teams in church to support activities.
- To attract people to the church.
- Form community links with schools, multi-faith links and care homes.
- To build on our desire to be a more inclusive church.
- Be involved in events/activities in the church.
- Develop and support work with children and families.
- Make church accessible to all.
- Encourage the development of the musical side of worship.

### Summary

St Leonard's has a strong sense of community despite being a relatively small congregation. We have an understanding of the areas that we need to work at and develop, in order to grow the Kingdom of God here.

## **7.0 Person specification. House for Duty post.**

We are seeking a leader of spiritual depth and imagination, who will encourage, enable and support others to lead us forward in our vision and inspire us all to take the next steps along the road. We hope to appoint someone energetic and friendly, who is committed to working collaboratively with the PCC and to support the work at the Ridings care home.

Any potential applicant would need to work activity with St. Leonard's school and develop links with Dashwood Academy. Experience of collaborating with other Christian denominations, as well as working with other faiths will be an advantage, as will an ability to appreciate the needs of young families and balance this with the needs of the older community.

**To create a caring, sustainable and growing Christian  
presence within our parish.  
Growing together as the family of God,  
living and sharing His love in the community.**

For and on behalf of the St Leonard's PCC, March 2022

# Appendix 1

## Ministry Team at St Leonard's Church - its purpose

The role of the Ministry Team is to support the PCC in decisions about practices that relate to spiritual well-being within the congregation and the community. It should meet regularly, before PCC meetings, to consider issues and make recommendations. It is the PCC who make all final decisions.

The Ministry Team should:

Occasionally review regular church communion and prayer services, considering if they are meeting the needs of the whole congregation, all ages and abilities. This involves looking at the days of the week services are held, their timing, the materials used and ways of worship and teaching offered.

Consider 'extra' services, prayer meetings and Bible Studies that occur throughout the year e.g. at Christmas, during Lent etc.  
To put forward ideas and outline planning for these.

Consider ways to meet the spiritual needs of children both in church, the community and at St Leonard's School.

Consider how we help the residents of The Ridings in their spiritual life by organising services, prayer meetings or Bible Studies for them.

Consider service type events that might be needed to serve the community where these are extra to other services, or would be better in a different venue e.g. memorial services, carol services etc.

When needed the Ministry Team should seek the views of the congregation, community and school to find out their needs, using formal and informal methods as appropriate.