

# THE BENEFICE OF WITNEY



St Mary  
the Virgin

St John  
Baptist Curbridge

St John  
Evangelist Hailey

Holy Trinity  
Woodgreen

St Kenelm  
Minster Lovell

Called to be a community of mercy and kindness



Team Vicar Profile  
The Benefice of Witney

## Contents

Welcome! .....	4
Foreword from The Bishop of Dorchester.....	4
Message from the Associate Area Dean .....	5
Our Vision and Values .....	6
Our next Team Vicar.....	6
Supporting our new Team Vicar .....	8
Accommodation .....	9
About Witney and its Surrounding Villages.....	9
Snapshot of Churches.....	10
Holy Trinity, Woodgreen, Witney.....	11
St John the Evangelist, Hailey .....	12
Saint Mary the Virgin, Witney .....	14
Saint John the Baptist, Curbridge .....	15
St Kenelm’s, Minster Lovell .....	16
Churches Together in Witney.....	16
Occasional Offices .....	16
Outreach: Serving our Community.....	17
Anna Chaplaincy .....	17
Ministry of Hospitality .....	17
Windrush Place: a greenhouse initiative.....	18
Youth & Schools Work.....	18
Supporting Local Charities and initiatives .....	19
Eco & Social Justice.....	19
Social Activities .....	21
Meet the Team .....	22
Other Information and Links .....	23
Our Churches.....	24
Addresses .....	25
Useful QR Codes .....	25

# THE BENEFICE OF WITNEY



St Mary  
the Virgin

St John  
Baptist Curbridge

St John  
Evangelist Hailey

Holy Trinity  
Woodgreen

St Kenelm  
Minster Lovell

Called to be a community of mercy and kindness

## A Prayer for our new Team Vicar

Shepherd and guardian of all souls, call to your Church and ours a priest after your own heart; one of faith and prayer, filled with the Holy Spirit; one who has vision and wisdom; one who has a true love for all people. Prepare the priest of your choice for ministry among us in the team and the benefice. Prepare us to receive the priest you call with love and joy. Guide all with responsibility for this task. We ask this through Jesus the Lord.

Amen.

## Welcome!

Thank you for your interest in our Benefice Profile. In this document we describe our parishes, our mission, and our aspirations for the future. We hope this will help you to discern whether God may be calling you to be our next Team Vicar.

If you would like to have an informal conversation about the post then please do contact the Team Rector, Toby, [rector@witneyparish.org.uk](mailto:rector@witneyparish.org.uk) 07789 741593 or the Archdeacon, the Ven David Tyler, [david.tyler@oxford.anglican.org](mailto:david.tyler@oxford.anglican.org)

## Foreword from The Bishop of Dorchester

Dear potential applicants,

I am delighted that you are reading this profile and encourage you to pray about whether this position might be the role to which God is now calling you.

The Benefice of Witney is seeking a Team Vicar who will be people-centred, inspiring and friendly. The new priest will be approachable and welcoming to all. The new minister will be reflective, sincere and prayerful and will wish to get involved in the significant ministry of hospitality within the benefice. The Eucharist and Daily Office hold a special place in the life of this team.

You will find a friendly Deanery with supportive and experienced colleagues. Our Episcopal Area and Diocese are in good heart, expectant for all that God will do and thankful for all that God is doing.

Please pray about whether you might be the right minister to join us. If you decide to apply, I would be delighted to receive your application for this important position and look forward to the possibility of welcoming you as a potential colleague to partner in the gospel.

With every blessing,

*+ Gavin Dorchester*

Rt. Revd Gavin Collins, Bishop of Dorchester



## Message from the Associate Area Dean

Dear potential applicants,

Witney Deanery consists of a vibrant collection of 38 churches, with very different styles of worship. As a Chapter we meet together regularly on Zoom and in person, to support each other and share aspects of ministry and mission.



We have 3 deanery priorities: Church Growth, Schools' Ministry and Deepening Faith and Discipleship. These give us a focus for our work as a deanery, where we share in working groups and put on events to facilitate development in our priority areas. We are also a pilot for the Church of England's Fresh Expressions – Greenhouse Projects that enable churches to nurture each other in their faith by offering mutual support.

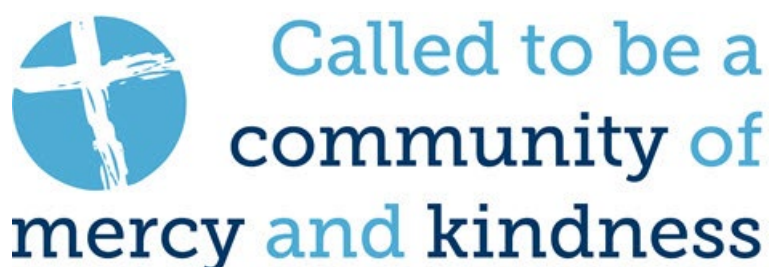
Our Synod meets three times a year and concentrates on sharing positive ideas and plans for the future and particularly supporting the smaller, rural parishes.

As a Deanery, we have met our Parish Share fully over the last 8 years. We are particularly trying to support the smaller parishes by creating 'smart and achievable parish share targets' and support each other to continue to enable our mission and ministry to grow.

We are excited to have the opportunity to have a new colleague join our chapter and to share in ministry together in this beautiful area of the country. We can assure whoever God calls among us, that they will have a warm welcome and firm support!

I know that a new Team Vicar will be well supported by the Witney Benefice Team and be able to approach the Rector to answer specific points, but I am also happy to talk to anyone who has any further questions.

Rev. Simon Kirby Associate Area Dean ([simon@coggesparish.com](mailto:simon@coggesparish.com) or 07862 254540)



## Our Vision and Values

Our vision is that we are called to be a community of Mercy and Kindness.

Mercy is a key word that indicates God's action towards us, and how we are to encounter one another and the world. Nothing in our witness can be lacking in mercy, for *'Mercy is the Queen of all virtues'* (John Chrysostom).

Kindness is one of the fruits of the Spirit and lies at the heart of our acceptance of everyone we serve in our community, which to us is both the gathered church and our friends and neighbours in our towns and villages.



As we live out our vocation, we use the structure illustrated to enable the Ministry Team to reflect on our priorities. Our central desire is to grow deeper in God. We have four key pillars of our common life together: the Eucharist and Daily Office, which sustain all that we are, and Inclusivity and Hospitality, which shape all that we do. Supported by these four pillars we recognise seven key areas of focus for our ministry which inform our discussion and help us to prioritise our activities.

The benefice is fully committed to the common vision of churches across the Diocese of Oxford to become a more Christ-like church, where we strive to be contemplative, compassionate, and courageous for the sake of God's world. <https://www.oxford.anglican.org/our-vision-and-values/>

## Our next Team Vicar

The Benefice of Witney is looking for a Team Vicar who will work enthusiastically and collaboratively with clergy and laity across the benefice. We seek someone who will be genuinely excited to be a part of a large, gifted Ministry Team with complementary skills and experience.

The Benefice has seven priorities as set out in our Vision and Values. The responsibility to develop each of these areas of focus rests with the Ministry Team as a whole. However, our new Team Vicar will be encouraged to engage in those areas to which they feel most called. We hope that this will provide a rich opportunity to explore and develop their vocation as a priest.

The role also has specific responsibilities:

- Pastoral oversight for Holy Trinity and Hailey Churches, whilst also sharing in ministry across the benefice:
  - Deepening the faith of the gathered church and seekers in new and creative ways
  - Championing the mission of Holy Trinity
  - Nurturing relationships and engaging in the life of Holy Trinity and the wider community
  - Renewing and revitalising worship at Hailey
  - Developing a wider base of leadership at Hailey
- Sharing in ministry across the team benefice including specific accountabilities, which are likely to include:
  - Administering the legal preliminaries for marriage supported by the parish administrator
  - Engaging with those seeking baptism, and their families, on an ongoing basis

We seek a confident and compassionate priest with excellent interpersonal skills, comfortable with IT, flexible, and able to adapt to the needs of the developing congregations.

They will be keen to connect across various communities within our benefice including our villages, and new estates. This will involve attendance at local events organised by our congregations and local organisations. The incoming Team Vicar will have a role in our ministry across 11 schools, in partnership with our Schools and Youth Chaplain, and will lead a collective worship/assembly at least once a week. They will also be involved with some of our six nursing and care homes, working with our Anna Chaplaincy team. Pre-Covid we had a very active friendship link with a group of churches in Sweden in Voxtorp, Kalmar County, through the Porvoo agreement. We are currently rebuilding this and would hope the incoming priest will be fully supportive of this work which is led by the other Team Vicar.

We are seeking a person who is at ease with our style of worship where the celebration of the Eucharist is at the heart of our lives and the Gospel is preached with accessibility and impact. The priests preside across the benefice (in full Eucharistic vestments) and the incoming colleague will normally preside 2-3 Sundays a month at Holy Trinity and Hailey, leading their worship, whilst also working closely with others. The weekday Eucharists are shared across the priests in the team and involve our retired PTO colleagues.

We are open to the development of our liturgy and worship and are comfortable with a presiding priest who freely adapts the order of service within the bounds of canonical catholic discipline and respect for the tradition of the benefice. We regularly host masses and gatherings for the Society of Catholic Priests. We also treasure the observance of Holy Week and the rich observance of the liturgical year.

Our new priest will be someone with a strong spirit of collegiality in team decision-making and who will fully support the Team and the Rector. They will also be keen to share fresh ideas and insights to help us to develop all areas of our ministry. There will be ample opportunities to suggest new initiatives to help us achieve our vision. Our new priest will be prepared to take risks and make mistakes, knowing that they will be securely held within the team. They will also be at ease with living within the [Clergy Guidelines 2015.pdf](#).

At Petertide our context-based Ordinand, James, will be made deacon and serve his title curacy with us. We hope the incoming Team Vicar will undertake a monthly supervision, gaining experience of training a curate and developing their skills in support of the Team Rector as Training Incumbent.

Our next Team Vicar will have a deep commitment to the sacramental life and the Daily Office, giving highest priority to joining daily with other members of the Ministry Team for Morning Prayer (09:00) and Evening Prayer (17:30) which are held at St Mary's. They will also share in the responsibility of drawing in new members into our church community and nurturing those in our care with grace and compassion.



## Supporting our new Team Vicar

The incoming priest will be supported by a large group of diverse church leaders with a great breadth of experience and skill. We work in a highly collaborative and interactive way, sharing ministry, encouragement, and nurture of one another. Regular one-to-one 'interview' time with the Team Rector gives a space to reflect and plan.

We hold a weekly Ministry Team Meeting where the group gathers for a time of reflection on the up-coming Sunday's Gospel passage; sharing personal and professional ministry needs; and updates on the past week and upcoming events. Once a month we have an extended Strategic Meeting. As a team we treasure laughter, support and encouragement.

We are fortunate to have an experienced Parish Administrator who works five days a week and undertakes a huge range of delegated admin tasks, including for occasional offices, in support of our ministry.

There is a governance structure in place which includes Standing Committee, the PCC and DCCs of the individual churches, the Communications Group, and focus groups in support of specific activities, for example, Hailey Relief in Need, Holy Trinity Outreach, and Holy Trinity Roof Appeal.

If desired, we will offer an informal support group of lay people to help the incoming priest to integrate as they establish their ministry. The benefice induction process will be followed to orientate our new Team Vicar and introduce them to key people.

All elements of safeguarding remain a priority for the benefice. This is reflected in our level 3 accreditation of the national Parish Dashboard's Scheme. We recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

The benefice has a dedicated team of volunteers to support worship and other aspects of our common life. They contribute not only to spiritual growth within the benefice, but also organise social events offered to the wider community.



The Benefice makes effective use of IT for communications and to help us all ‘work smarter’, using Microsoft 365 to store shared files securely; Outlook for email and shared calendars; and Teams and Zoom for online collaboration. We are introducing an online Contact Management System to coordinate pastoral work.

We want our Team Vicar to enjoy a sustainable work-life balance and will do all we can to support their quality of life, including a weekly protected day off, a 2-day period every 6 or so weeks and an annual retreat. We believe, too, that personal development never ends, so the benefice will actively encourage continued spiritual and professional development, releasing the time and funding needed for personal growth. Naturally all travel and other expenses reasonably incurred in carrying out the role will be met.

## Accommodation



25 Clare Place Witney OX29 7AJ



The post comes with an excellent modern (2018) detached family home located on the new Windrush Estate, two miles west of Witney town centre. There are four bedrooms (two ensuite) and a family bathroom. There is a large lounge, a study, large kitchen/dining room, separate utility room, detached garage, and driveway. Scan the QR Code opposite for a link to the [architect's floor plan and elevations](#).



## About Witney and its Surrounding Villages

The Benefice of Witney consists of the parishes of Witney and Minster Lovell and is made up of five churches, some large and some small, serving the town of Witney and the villages round about.

Witney is an historic market town lying on the eastern fringe of the Cotswolds and 13 miles west of Oxford. Witney was a centre of the wool trade and blanket industry for centuries.

The centre of the town retains many historic buildings from this era, but those industries are now largely gone. Development in the town centre has been controlled, meaning that almost all retail and leisure facilities are centrally located and accessible on foot.



There is no 'out-of-town' shopping centre, which has kept the pedestrian-only town centre vibrant with a good range of shops, supermarkets, and a twice weekly market. There are frequent, reliable, and wi-fi-equipped buses into Oxford, Cheltenham, and the Hanborough and Oxford Parkway railway stations.



Hailey is a village two miles north of Witney and comprises three neighbourhoods: Middletown on the main road, Poffley End, and Delly End. Hailey has a CoE Primary School; Village Hall; several farms; and a hairdresser, but it no longer has a shop. It is a lively village, with a summer festival and lots of activities throughout the year.

Curbridge is a small settlement which lies to the south-west of Witney and is separated from Witney by the A40 by-pass. It is an

agricultural area, with farms both in and around the settlement close by the fast-growing Windrush Place estate.

Minster Lovell is a small village on the River Windrush two and a half miles west of Witney. Minster Lovell village has three parts: Lower Minster, Little Minster and Upper Minster. Lower Minster includes St Kenelm's church, Minster Lovell Hall and the Old Swan Inn and Minster Mill Hotel.

A large part of Upper Minster is the Charterville Allotments, which were founded by the Chartists in 1846. Minster Lovell has a CofE Primary School.



## Snapshot of Churches



## Holy Trinity, Woodgreen, Witney

Holy Trinity is located towards the east of Witney and stands on the edge of Woodgreen. Holy Trinity was consecrated in 1849.



We strive to be a hospitable supportive congregation that shows God's love in our actions towards others with an active group working for charities and outreach.

Our enthusiastic choir and talented organist help lead the worship for all Sunday Services. There is a regular 'Messy Mass', an intergenerational Eucharistic Service where children are invited to help lead the service, enjoy craft activities, and share breakfast together.

We are an outward looking church keen to involve our local community in the annual Pancake & Quiz evening and summer BBQ. We are raising funds for repairs to the roof.

*Holy Trinity has a small, more intimate atmosphere which we find relaxing and comforting. Whilst we are somewhat erratic attendees, we appreciate the 'family' style welcome received from the congregation. New member*

**Sunday Service:** 10: 45 Sung Eucharist with hymns, followed by refreshments. Average attendance: 40

**Tuesday Service:** 11:00 Holy Communion on the first Tuesday of each month, followed by refreshments. Average attendance: 5

**Strengths:**

- A welcoming church that offers a traditional style of worship, enhanced by a cherished choir
- A smaller congregation which allows individuals to become more involved in the life of the church
- A strong commitment to charitable fundraising and social activities

**Challenges:**

- An ageing congregation
- Greater community engagement around the estates bordering Holy Trinity

**Opportunities:**

- Developing the church as a social hub for the community, particularly midweek
- Identifying new ways of drawing in families, youth and the unchurched, while maintaining a traditional style of worship

We pray for a new Team Vicar who will champion the mission of Holy Trinity; who will make time to nurture relationships; who will play a more active part in the life of the Holy Trinity community after services; and become more involved with local families and community.

### St John the Evangelist, Hailey

St John the Evangelist church is in the middle of the village of Hailey, 2 miles north of Witney. The church was built in 1869 and is a fine example of Victorian architecture, Oxford style.

We are a warm, welcoming, and outward looking congregation, and a focal point for village life by hosting well supported community events such as an annual rounders match.



The weekly Tiddlers Group for “bumps, babies and pre-school children” is a new and popular recent initiative. We are fully committed to being an eco-church with the churchyard set aside as a source of biodiversity and natural sanctuary.

**Sunday Service:** 09:15 Holy Communion with hymns, followed by refreshments. Average attendance: 24

**Thursday Service:** 10:00 in St John’s or next door in the Middletown Grange nursing home. Average attendance: 4 to 14



**Strengths:**

- An enthusiastic congregation genuinely open to creative new ideas
- A focal point for community-wide activities such as village festivals
- Strong links with the adjacent nursing home

**Challenges:**

- An ageing congregation with few younger members
- Growing a wider base of leadership

**Opportunities:**

- Building on good links with the school and community groups
- Identifying ways of drawing in new members and connecting further with the village

We pray for a new Team Vicar who can renew, grow and revitalise worship while maintaining the support of the existing congregation; further develop links with the school, care home and community groups; and make our church attractive to new and younger members.

*Hailey is a wonderfully caring church community, helping those of us who are needing support and understanding, practically and prayerfully.*  
Congregation member

*Hailey has a special strength when it comes to rural events, wildlife and nature. We spend considerable time creating great natural environments in our churchyard, and making sure things are done in the best possible way to encourage these*



## Saint Mary the Virgin, Witney



St Mary's is an imposing medieval church set in beautiful and historic surroundings in the heart of Witney. Rededicated in 1243, it is the main Anglican and civic church for the town.



We aspire to be an inclusive, welcoming community of mercy and kindness and we extend a warm invitation to everyone to come and join us irrespective of race, sexuality, background, or age. We are a member of the Inclusive Church Network which celebrates and affirms every person and does not discriminate. Our Sunday liturgy is concelebrated by the priests present with regular use of incense, and four healing Eucharists a year.

We are an outward-looking church, committed to sharing God's love in our actions for the wide variety of communities that we serve.

We extend gracious hospitality to a wide variety of different groups: events include an annual Beer Festival, Oktoberfest, and the Witney Festival of Food and Drink (WFOFAD). The annual Witney Feast commemorates the original celebrations of 1243 and places the church at the centre of this major event in the life of the town.

We encourage external organisations to use church buildings and facilities for activities. These organisations include choirs, local interest groups, Round Table, charities, and environmental



groups. The newly refurbished Winchester Room hosts small events such as teaching and training sessions, lunches, and celebrations.

**Sunday Service:** 10:45 Sung Parish Eucharist (Contemporary Language, with hymns) followed by refreshments. Average attendance: c100

**Weekday Service:** Wednesday 11:00 Eucharist followed by refreshments. Average attendance: 20+

**Daily Office:** Morning Prayer on weekdays at 09:00 and Evening Prayer (except Saturday) at 17:30. Average attendance: 4-12



**Strengths:**

- A spiritual and social hub for Witney
- Engaging liturgy enhanced by excellent music and a gifted congregation
- Hosting popular community events

**Challenges:**

- Raising £1.5m for our *Inspiring Change* campaign to replace the floor and heating
- Managing the risk of volunteer fatigue in a busy church

**Opportunities:**

- Building on the work of our Youth Worker & School Chaplain
- Supporting our work with asylum seekers

## Saint John the Baptist, Curbridge

The small church (70 seats) of Saint John the Baptist was built in 1906 in an Arts and Crafts style.

It sits set back from the road in an open churchyard. There is a small regular congregation, but up to 30 for special occasions like the evening Carol Service.

The Sunday Service at 9:15 is either Holy Communion or Morning Prayer. Average attendance: 8



**Strengths:**

- A committed congregation
- The beauty and tranquillity of an arts and crafts church

**Challenges:**

- Responsibility lies on the shoulders of a small number of the congregation
- Discerning the future of the church

**Opportunities:**

- Building links with the nearby new housing estates



## St Kenelm's, Minster Lovell

Beautifully sited on the river Windrush, the church was constructed in approximately 1450.

St Kenelm's has a lovely tranquil setting. Behind the church are the remains of Minster Lovell Hall (known as "The Ruins").

The church is open every day from morning until dusk and attracts a steady stream of visitors to this English Heritage site.

**Sunday Service:** 09.15am Eucharist with hymns. Average attendance: 20

**Wednesday Service:** 10am Eucharist - first Wednesday of the month

### Strengths:

- A committed and loyal congregation
- Good visitor footfall
- Sound financial situation

### Challenges

- Difficulty in attracting younger generations to church activities.
- Location of church building limits community facing activity

### Opportunities:

- Developing more fully a ministry of welcome and education for visitors to The Ruins
- Developing more fully an arts ministry by offering more concerts and events in a beautiful space

## Churches Together in Witney

The benefice is well represented in Churches Together in Witney (CTiW), which includes most of the seventeen places of worship in the area. We work together with our neighbouring churches. This is a vital part of our ministry and other members often look to Witney benefice for support and encouragement. We work particularly closely with High Street Methodists and the Congregational Church. There is a monthly meeting of CTiW ministers to support and pray together.



## Occasional Offices



Our occasional Offices are a key part of our common ministry. Pre-covid we had the largest number of Baptisms in the episcopal area. These offer great opportunities in terms of missional outreach. We hope that an incoming colleague will relish the opportunities these bring to minister to people outside the church, and within, at special moments.

In the last 12 months we held 44 baptisms, 12 weddings and 59 funerals within the benefice.

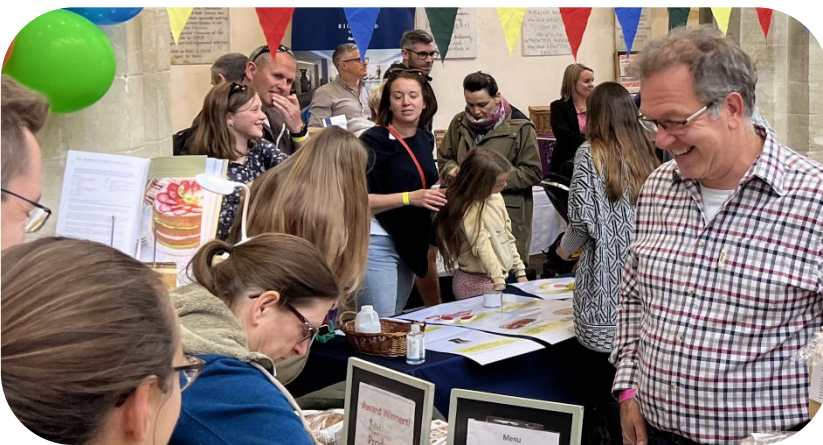
## Outreach: Serving our Community

### Anna Chaplaincy

Our Anna Chaplain and three Anna Friends offer spiritual care to older people. Our Anna Chaplaincy Team is involved in visiting people who are still part of the Body of Christ in the benefice; offering Home Communion when requested; being a 'listening ear' with older people in our congregations across the benefice; maintaining good links with six local care homes: Cedar Court, Fernleigh, Merryfield, Middletown Grange, Millers Grange and Richmond Village.



### Ministry of Hospitality



Hosting events for our community is a principal way in which we can extend hospitality. Saint Mary's is a focus for many civic services and events including those for the RAF at Brize Norton, with a particular link with the RAF Regiment. We also host concerts and special events for charities and other organisations.

We have a flourishing festival ministry which includes the Witney Festival of Food and Drink, an annual charitable

event showcasing local artisan food and drink producers. Stalls, street food, live music, children's activities, and a bar & café mean a fun day out for food lovers and all the family! The day is hosted by church volunteers.

We also host two annual beer festivals in the church: Oktoberfest is held near to the date of Witney Feast, when we celebrate the rededication of St Mary's in 1243. The Beer Festival in Spring is a hugely popular event, with regular attendees from miles around.

The whole ministry team is actively engaged in supporting these events as part of our commitment to extending hospitality. It will be important for the incoming Team Vicar to share a vision of the importance of blurring the boundaries between sacred and secular.



## Windrush Place: a greenhouse initiative

Our Benefice 'Pioneer Ecumenical Minister' is the Rev'd Jacky Bone, a Baptist Minister. She works with an ecumenical team reaching out onto Windrush Place and Colwell Green, large new housing developments in the West of Witney, which includes the area the new Team Vicar will live in, as part of a [greenhouse](#) project.

Since the estates began to be built the team have led events that have sought to bless and serve, helping to create a strong community. They are in touch with over 70 unchurched families.

A new congregation currently meets on the first Sunday of the month at Windrush school for a [Messy Church](#) which draws up to 25 families who live on the estate. We also run a weekly tots' group at the Windrush School on a Wednesday morning for families in the area. We even have an allotment! Activities offered include a family-focussed *Teddy Bears Picnic*. We are gently exploring the place of the sacraments in this new congregation, an important next step.



## Youth & Schools Work

We have a full time Youth Worker and Schools Chaplain funded by our congregations and a grant from the Diocese of Oxford. She coordinates the youth work of the Ministry Team in this priority area of focus.

The end of Covid restrictions has allowed us to re-establish in person contact with the 11 schools in and around the Benefice, providing regular input to collective worship throughout the year and work in Henry Box Secondary School.

The re-opening of our buildings has given us the opportunity to host activities for all ranges of young people, from the Tiddlers group at Hailey, Messy Mass at Holy Trinity, Prayer Spaces and Witney Feast schools' activities in St Mary's, and the Young Disciples group which meets regularly in the Winchester Room.



New initiatives are thriving, some of which include:

- Christian Union at Henry Box: We meet weekly and have grown from 3 pupils to 18 within 6 weeks.
- Fun day at Minster Lovell: A funday for the whole community. Last year, 70+ children and their families attended to take part in the festivities.
- Asylum Seeker Friend (Children and Youth): Within the new community there were over 60 children and teenagers. Every child and young person were gifted a wrapped Christmas present.
- Our gathered church youth group for secondary school students is known as the Young Disciples who gather online or in person for fellowship, fun, and prayer.

## Supporting Local Charities and initiatives

The Benefice is proud to support, in particular, the work of three local charities based in Witney:



A Christian charity that provides a bridge between those who want to give and those in need.



Humanitarian Aid Relief Trust

HART (UK) provides aid and advocacy for persecuted peoples generally overlooked by other aid and media organisations



Witney based, Open Doors supports Christians who risk their lives to follow Jesus providing emergency relief and helping persecuted believers stand strong

We also support the work of three national charities:



Supports refugees to find welcome, work, and worthwhile housing



The Welcome Directory helps faith communities welcome people who have left or are leaving prison



Works with churches of different denominations to explore ways in which we may become more inclusive

Other charities supported by the benefice include [Christian Aid](#), [USPG](#), [African Children's Fund](#), [The Fire Fighters' Charity](#) & [Combat Stress](#).

## Eco & Social Justice

Striving for social and eco justice is one of the seven areas of focus by which we strive to grow closer to God.

We have an active Benefice Environment Group. The Witney Eco Forum meets monthly, attracting a wide range of speakers and engaged attendees from Witney and beyond.

St Mary's, Hailey and Holy Trinity have all obtained Bronze or Silver Eco awards under the UK A Rocha scheme.

We are actively involved in a wide range of social justice issues, including campaigning with Citizens' UK on a fair wage, assisting with homelessness issues, supporting vulnerable families and individuals, and working with other charities such as [Connections Support](#). Currently we are planning to host significant events around celebrating the NHS 75 and working locally and nationally on Asylum and Refugee concerns.



## Our Asylum Friends

Since December 2022, the Oxford Witney hotel has been home for over 200 asylum seekers and the benefice has been at the forefront of welcoming our new friends into the local community.

In conjunction with other churches, local relief agencies and relevant local authority departments, we have been able to help meet a wide variety of needs, from the provision of warm clothing and support with medical and schools' registration, to the establishment of English conversation classes. It has been a huge encouragement that many of these new friends (primarily Iranian, but also Eritrean and Sri Lankan) have sought to be baptized and to become actively involved in the prayer and worship offered in our churches.



## Social Activities

The benefice is lively, welcoming, and hospitable. We have much to celebrate and enjoy opportunities to get together for whatever reason. There are many activities taking place throughout the year; some are organised by the **benefice**, some by **individual churches** and others in collaboration with other local churches and organisations.

### Church orientated

Quiet Days

Choirs

Junior Church

Bell Ringers

Holy Week Activities

Pilgrimages

Prayer Groups

Benefice Retreat

Women's Social Group

Men's Social Group

Choral Evensongs

Wholeness and Healing

School Assemblies

Ground Breakers

School events at the Feast

Woodland Service

Prayer Shawls

Links with Sweden

### Local Community

Art Workshops

Christmas Charity Fair

Book Club

Street Pastors

Village Lunches

Shared Lunches

Benefice Walks

Jazz Concert and Picnic

Hailey Festival

Rounders

Singing Group

Witney Eco Forum

Community Chaplains

### Wider Community

Food and Drink Festival

Cotswold Churches Festival

Beer Festival

Music Festival

Witney Carnival

Witney Feast

Arts Festival

Oktoberfest

Great Big Green Week event

The Fridge



## Meet the Team



The Revd Canon Toby Wright, Team Rector



The Revd Dr Hugh White, Team Vicar



The Revd Canon Dr Joanna Collicutt, Associate Priest



The Revd Mark Thomas, Associate Priest



The Revd Sally Wright, Associate Priest



The Revd Jacky Bone, Pioneer Minister



The Revd Mark Bezerra Speeks, Assistant Priest



The Revd James Elward, Curate



The Revd Liz Johnson, Chaplain for Nurture



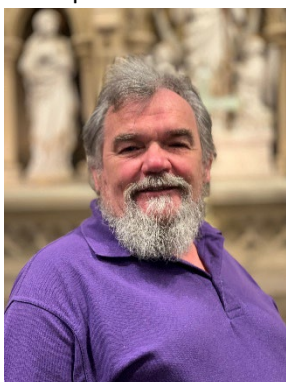
The Revd Alex Mahlava, Assistant Priest



Laverne Williams, Youth Worker



Julia Bee, Anna Chaplain for Older People



Dave Pizze, Lay Missioner



Richard Young, Licensed Lay Minister



Jeremy Lasman, Parish Warden



Kate Banks, Parish Warden



Rebecca Coatsworth,  
Pastoral Assistant



Michelle Bailey-Wells  
Benefice Administrator



Alison Spicer  
Safeguarding Officer



Sarah Jane Ebanja  
Safeguarding Officer

## Other Information and Links

### Local Government:

- [Oxfordshire County Council](#)
- [West Oxfordshire District Council](#)
- [Witney Town Council](#)
- [Hailey Parish Council](#)
- [Curbridge & Lew Parish Council](#)
- [Office of National Statistics Profile Witney Parish](#)
- [Nearest Pharmacy](#)

### Schools

- [Hailey Primary School](#)
- [The Batt School](#)
- [St Mary's Infant School](#)
- [St Kenelm's School, Minster Lovell](#)
- [Windrush School, Witney](#)
- [Witney Community School](#)
- [West Witney School](#)
- [The Henry Box School](#)
- [Springfield Special School](#)
- [Abingdon and Witney College](#)
- [Wood Green School](#)
- [Cokethorpe School](#)

# Our Churches



St John  
of the Evangelist Hailey





St Kenelm  
Minster Lovell



## Addresses

- Benefice Office St Mary the Virgin, Church Green Witney Oxfordshire OX28 4AW  
01993 779 492
- Office email: [office@witneyparish.org.uk](mailto:office@witneyparish.org.uk)
- St Mary the Virgin, Church Green, Witney, OX28 4AW
- Holy Trinity Church, Woodgreen, Witney, OX28 1DN
- St John the Baptist, 2 Church Row, Curbridge OX29 7NU
- St John the Evangelist, Hailey, OX29 9UB
- St Kenelm's Church, Minster Lovell OX29 0RR
- Safeguarding concerns: [safeguarding@witneyparish.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@witneyparish.org.uk)

## Useful QR Codes



New Team Vicar Vacancy  
web page



Subscribe to our weekly  
newsletter: Benefice Bulletin



Benefice of Witney  
website