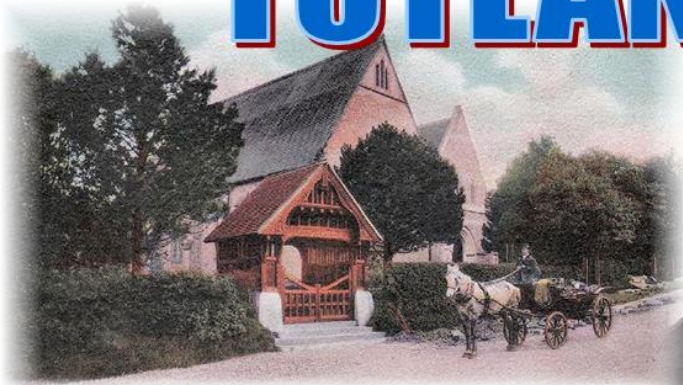
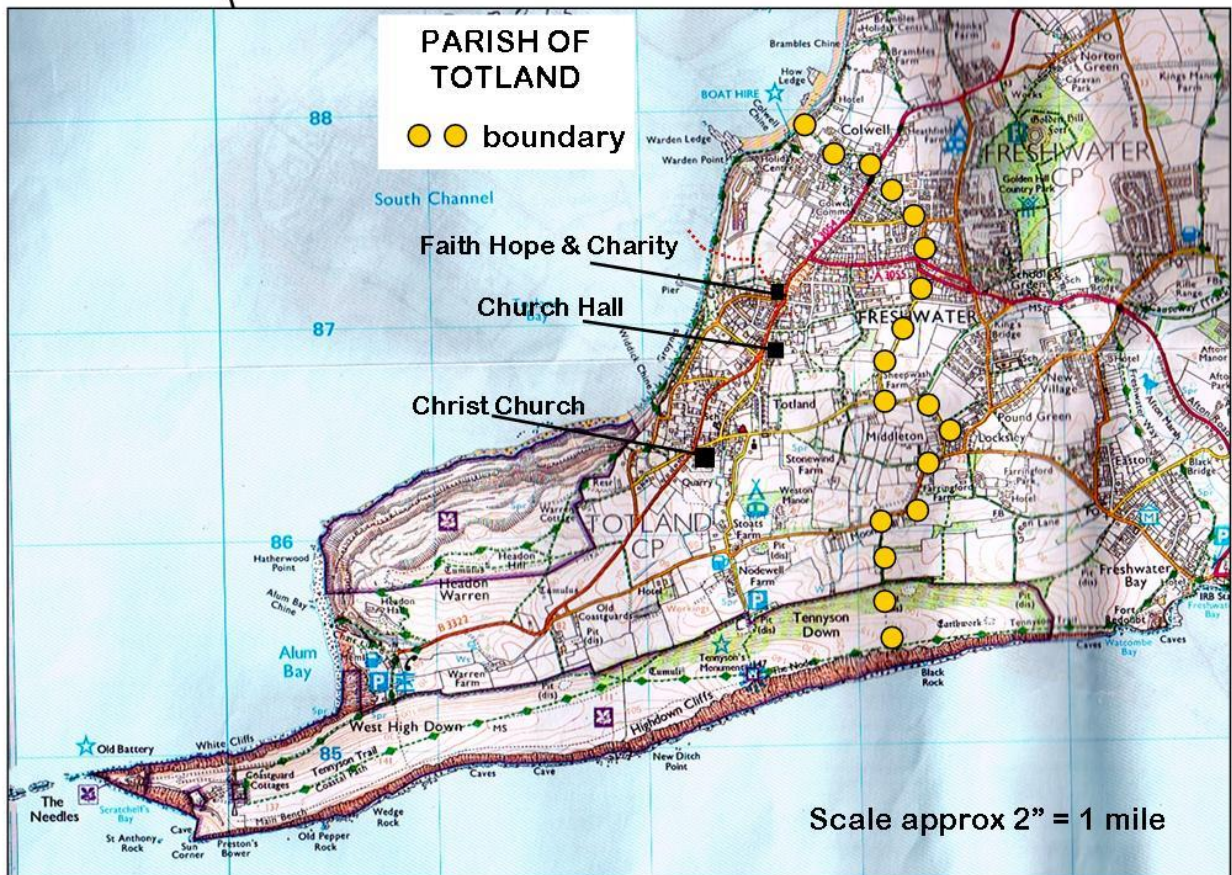


CHRIST CHURCH TOTLAND BAY



Parish Profile Spring 2013



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PARISH PROFILE SPRING 2013

INTRODUCTION

The Bishop of Portsmouth and the Church Patronage Trust wish to appoint a House for Duty Priest to the Parish of Christ Church, Totland Bay. Following the retirement of the Reverend Andy Yorke in May 2012, the Rector of Freshwater, the Reverend Mark Whatson, has maintained oversight of Christ Church. At a future, and as yet unknown date, when he moves to a new post, it is intended to create a new benefice of Freshwater, Yarmouth and Totland Bay. The House for Duty Priest at Christ Church will continue to have primary responsibility for Totland, but is expected to work collaboratively with the new incumbent and to encourage the development of the new benefice.

When the benefice of Freshwater and Totland becomes vacant, representatives from Totland will share with parish representatives from Freshwater and Yarmouth in the appointment of the new incumbent to the joint benefice.

As part of the developing process, the House for Duty Priest will be licensed as Assistant Curate to either the Area Dean or the Archdeacon of the Isle of Wight. At the creation of the new benefice they will be similarly licensed to the new incumbent.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CURRENT WORK AND MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH

Priorities:

- a. Continuing and enhanced outreach to the non-churchgoing people of the parish.
- b. Good pastoral provision, especially for the housebound.
- c. Improved links with the local (secular) primary school.
- d. Continuing close links with Churches Together on West Wight (CTWW), especially in the area of joint sponsorship of a Christian youth worker.
- e. Greater involvement of laity in services
- f. Encouragement of young people and families
- g. Supporting mission at home and overseas

Our ideal incumbent would:

- a. Be one who acknowledges the authority of scripture
- b. Have good communication skills
- c. Be a spiritual person, but able to interpret his/her faith in the 21st Century
- d. Have the ability to relate to a wide spectrum of people
- e. Have good leadership and organisational skills
- f. Be prepared to listen to and consult with the wardens and PCC and to be receptive to the spiritual and personal needs of the congregation

CHURCH AND PARISH

Christ Church Totland Bay is in the Deanery of West Wight and the Diocese of Portsmouth. It is the westernmost parish in the diocese. Although the church is situated at the geographical centre of the parish (see map), the heart of the village is nearly half a mile down the hill, site of the church hall. The population of Totland is 2,981 (ONS 2009), 33% of whom are over 65, 14% under 15. This shows a more elderly population than the national average. There is a high proportion of second homes.

Much of the parish is a designated part of the Island's Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). There are SSSIs at Colwell Bay and Headon Warren. A network of public footpaths opens up breathtaking views of sea and land.

There is a very good Health Centre in Freshwater; its GPs and staff show a real commitment to serving the community. There are also dentists and chiropodists. There is a large Co-operative supermarket with a good stock of local foods. Southern Vectis buses serve the whole island, with one route passing the vicarage. The open-topped bus to the Needles passes several times a day in summer. There is a local community minibus, the FYTBUS which operates between Freshwater, Yarmouth and Totland. The county town of Newport, 25 minutes by car, has all the major stores and facilities, including St Mary's Hospital.

There is little employment within the parish, apart from in care homes, pubs and small convenience stores, and seasonal work in the tourist industry. The Needles Pleasure Park is at the western extreme of the parish and is the largest single seasonal employer. Unemployment on the Island as a whole stands at 5000 or 8% of the active population, higher than the South East (5.8%) and national average (7.9%). Average weekly pay is £457, compared to £559 in the South East and £508 nationally. (Source: ONS www.nomisweb.co.uk).

CHURCH BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES

There are currently 5 buildings administered under the umbrella of Christ Church:

The Church and Annex

Built in 1875 of Portland stone, the church is in good condition. In the past 15 years, various changes have been made, the most significant being:

1. The building of the wooden **Annex** behind the church. Intended for use as a meeting place, training and junior church venue, funds to build it were raised from numerous activities and generous individual donations. Much of the unskilled work was done by church members.



2. The removal of loose pews from the side chapel, updating of the kitchen area, re-carpeting and purchase of 50 chairs (all by donation/fundraising) to create a more flexible, useable working space.
3. Installation of the complete new central heating system, possible thanks to a very generous legacy.
4. Complete replacement of sound system including loop facility.

The Vicarage



Next door to the church, the vicarage is a fairly modern (1970s), centrally heated four-bedroomed house with a garden laid mostly to lawn. There are several mature trees, and red squirrels are frequent visitors. There was space for the last vicar to keep hens and ducks! The vicarage is currently let on a short lease by the Diocese.

The Church Hall



Situated in the heart of the village of Totland on the Broadway, the Church Hall is, unfortunately, nearly half a mile from the church. Built in the 1930s, its upkeep is a constant challenge to the hall managers and PCC. Church use of the building is infrequent, but a wide variety of community activities take place there, ranging from local drama productions and variety shows to over-50s table tennis and Brownies. It is used on weekdays by Watersmeet, an all-day club for adults with learning difficulties. The annual pantomime, a highlight of the village year, is performed 6 times over to packed houses.

In 2008 efforts were made to let the hall to the Totland Village Trust for a peppercorn rent in return for their assuming responsibility for maintenance and letting. This would have enabled access to a larger pool of community funding, but sadly, it came to nought in a morass of legal discussions and unachievable criteria. There is now a bright light at the end of the tunnel; Eco Island, the organisation implementing the Isle of Wight's Sustainable Community Strategy under the direction of the Isle of Wight Council, has selected the hall as a showpiece for energy saving improvements. Cavity wall insulation, electrical upgrading and replacement windows are all to be undertaken by the organisation at minimum/no cost.

Faith Hope and Charity



In 2008, in an effort to make up some of the costs of running the Church Hall, its managers, John and Sally Honeychurch, negotiated the lease on an empty motor

spares shop in the Broadway. Initial plans were to run the charity shop for a month, but at the end of that period, it had been so successful, both in terms of funds raised and as a Christ Church presence in the heart of the village, that it could not possibly be closed. It is still going. Along the way, the flat above it was taken on for storage, and the car showroom next door for furniture sales. The whole set of buildings is in a poor state of repair and we are no longer able to use the garage because of major water influx. Our rent, however is very low. We have a loyal band of staff, many of whom are not Christ Church members, but some of whom have started to attend church as a result of this association. Our customers enjoy being offered a cup of tea or coffee at no charge and we have become listening ears for many problems. Proceeds from the shop provide not only much needed funds for the running of the church and hall, but also enable us to make major contributions to other charities, church and secular, at home and abroad.



WORSHIP AND MINISTRY

Christ Church is within the evangelical tradition. Leadership of all our services is currently planned at a monthly meeting, chaired by the Rector of All Saints' Freshwater and attended by all retired clergy and readers in the area. The meeting covers services held at All Saints', St James Yarmouth, Christ Church and St Agnes, Freshwater Bay.

To our great regret, we do not currently have a Junior Church.

REGULAR SERVICES. There are three regular services per week:

Sunday at 10.30 am (average recent attendance 55). Coffee/tea and biscuits are shared at the end of the service. Prayer ministry is always available.

Week 1 Family/All Age Worship, led since the departure of the last incumbent, by lay members of the congregation under the watchful eye and sound advice of our resident retired priest/lay reader partnership with major involvement by the music group (see below).

Weeks 2 and 4 **Common Worship Morning Prayer**, led as planned at the monthly meeting by retired clergy or reader.

Week 3 **Common Worship Holy Communion**, led, as planned at the monthly meeting, by Rector of All Saints' or retired clergy, with lay assistants.

Sunday at 4 pm (average attendance in the past year 10). Each month typically features 2 BCP Services (one Evening Prayer, one Holy Communion); 1 CW Service (EP) and one joint service with CTWW (see page 9).

Wednesday at 9.30 am (average attendance 8) Holy Communion, alternate BCP and CW.

Intercessions; With the departure of our vicar and the ensuing interregnum, it was decided that the best way to maintain continuity and a personal and relevant aspect to our prayers was for the members of Christ Church to assume responsibility for intercessions at the main 10.30 am service. This appears to be working well.

Scripture Readings are done by volunteers from the congregation on a rota basis

IN ADDITION:

Home Communion is administered in retirement and private homes as required, normally by Reverend Paul Bell, our resident retired clergyman and his wife Lucie, a reader.

Weekly Prayer Group meets in the Annex each Friday.

Mission Prayer Group meets monthly in the home of Paul and Lucie Bell.

Special services include baptisms, weddings and funerals as required.

Combined services with the Freshwater Benefice and CTWW.

MUSIC AT CHRIST CHURCH



Music plays an important part in all aspects of the life of the church. We are most fortunate to have an extremely fine organ, said to be the best on the Island. It has been played in recitals by such notables as Professor Ian Tracey, Dr Roy Massey and

the late Carlo Curley. A popular feature in the music calendar for 2012 was 'The Organ Builders Entertain, a recital and fascinating talk by the two men responsible for the care and maintenance of the instrument. Our organist is Dr Neil Walker who also plays at St Swithin's, Thorley, with whom we were in a joint benefice until the interregnum. There is an adult choir of 8-10, who sing (robed) at all the morning services, except Family Worship. Others join for special festivals, bringing numbers up to 15-20. The worship group (with piano and occasional guitar and percussion) leads the congregation in the singing of worship songs at both morning prayer services and for the whole of the family service. There have been concerts in the past year from the Westphalia Choir and the Island Youth Band (the latter at Christmas in aid of Wessex Cancer).

TEACHING

Home Groups. There are currently 2 Home Groups, increasing to 7 this year for Lent Study in collaboration with CTWW.

Confirmation classes have traditionally been held as required. There are none at present.

Alpha Courses have been held in the past.

Weston Academy. Two years ago the then Weston Primary School (the only school in the parish apart from St Saviours RC Primary) was threatened with closure. Vociferous opposition from parents who wished the only *secular* school on West Wight to remain led to its relaunch as Weston Academy. Even so, representatives of Christ Church lead assembly once a week, the school holds its Christingle service in the church, and this year, for the first time, the Head asked to hold an Easter Service at Christ Church (although, sadly, a compulsory teacher training day meant that this did not happen).

TRAINING

In house. In the year prior to his departure, the vicar organised training workshops in leading intercessions, music and scripture reading in church.

External. In the past year, churchwardens, members of the PCC and pastoral care workers have attended diocesan training courses appropriate to their roles. A recent diocesan safeguarding training day was held in the Annex and attended by people from across the Island.

PASTORAL CARE

Following the departure of the vicar, the PCC were well aware of the need to ensure that pastoral care was covered from within the church family. Many members of the congregation were already involved in visiting the elderly, giving lifts etc, but the implementation of a Pastoral Care Group, led by Ros Holley has ensured that none of our more vulnerable members suffer as a result of being inadvertently overlooked.

We are taking steps to ensure that our actions comply with the safeguarding guidelines laid down by the diocese. We see pastoral care as one of the most important ways we can show God's love to those struggling with the frailty of old age, many of whom have served him faithfully in the past.

INVOLVEMENT IN THE WIDER CHURCH AND SECULAR COMMUNITY

Churches Together on West Wight (CTWW)

Monthly joint services are held in member churches on a rotational basis. The title of the organisation may be changed to *Christians Together on West Wight*. Membership comprises all the local churches; Baptist, Church of England, Methodist, Roman Catholic and the URC.

Lent Brunches are held in Freshwater Memorial Hall every Saturday throughout Lent, with different churches heading up different weeks. These serve to show Christians at work together on West Wight, as well as raising considerable funds (nearly £4,000 in 2012) which are donated to local and international charities, both Christian and secular.

There is a **Good Friday Procession of Witness** in Freshwater attended by members of all the CTWW churches.

Christian Youth Worker

For the past three years, members of CTWW, together with individual benefactors, have joined together to employ a Christian Youth Worker for the West Wight. The first Youth Worker left recently after a happy and successful tour of duty. Her replacement was commissioned at a youth service at Christ Church, with a congregation of 102 on 24 February 2013.



It is a great pleasure to us at Christ Church that the West Wight Youth Group meets in the newly renovated cellar (pictured above) under our church with occasional forays into the Annex.

Benefice of All Saints' Freshwater and St James Yarmouth

During the interregnum, joint services have been held at each of the three churches, all featuring the combined choirs. Notwithstanding the very different churchmanship of the three, services have been generally well-received and well-supported. A joint

Epiphany Songs of Praise at Christ Church on 6 January 2013 was most successful, and attracted an attendance of 90.

Meetings

Both the Deanery Synod and the West Wight Cluster Group (which comprises the parishes of Freshwater and Yarmouth, Totland, Shalfleet (4 churches) and Brighstone (5) have met in the Annex in the recent past. A well-attended Diocesan Safeguarding Training Day was held there in January.

Men's Breakfasts, organised by men from various local churches including ours, are held in local hotels 4/5 times per year and attended by around 40 men. They feature a full English and a visiting speaker – a winning combination!

Local Residential Homes are visited regularly by Christ Church members, independently, as part of our pastoral care efforts, and in conjunction with CTWW. All are visited at Christmas by a carol choir composed of Christ Church members and CTWW. Regular monthly services are held in two residential homes.

SOCIAL AND FUND RAISING ACTIVITIES

We see all fund-raising events as an important means of reaching out to the congregation and the wider community. We feel that we can show Christ's love through a warm welcome and hospitality, especially when a communal meal is involved.

Church Lunches

Four lunches have been held in the church in the past year, making full use of the side chapel and back of the nave.



Average attendance at the lunches for Harvest and New Year is 75/80, but a record 120 were fed at the Farewell to the Yorkes Lunch (pictured) last April. There are no cooking facilities in the church, but thanks to the use of up to 12 slow cookers and a willing army of cooks, we are able to offer a choice of hot main meals and many toothsome desserts. We are currently investigating a way to install a cooker on the church site so that we may produce more regular meals to which we could invite the wider community.

Special Fundraising Events



An Olympic Torch Fete was held in July to celebrate the torch as it passed on its way to the Needles. Light lunches were served and there was a barbecue. Heavy rain drove many people inside the church who would not normally come in, and we were able to offer hot drinks, snacks, and somewhere to dry wet clothes...and the sun came out in the nick of time!

Open Gardens. On 17 June 2012, three church members opened their very different gardens and sold refreshments, bric-à-brac and garden items in aid of church funds.

Coffee Mornings are held in local hotels and are generally well attended.



The Great Christ Church Bake Off (pictured) was held in the Annex on 3 March 2013. Speaker at the church service was Hannah King who talked about the work of the Isle of Wight Food Bank. This was followed by lunch in the church, then the baking competition. There were almost 30 entries in all, over half of which were from the men of the congregation and standards were uniformly high. The occasion ended with tea and cakes, and most of the exhibits were sold for church funds.

Faith Hope and Charity is our major fund-raising venture. Last year, the total sum raised in the shop was over £28,000, with running expenses of £4,500, enabling a large sum (£10,000) to be paid towards essential repairs to the church windows, as well as work on the church hall and donations to charities at home and overseas.

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

The PCC normally meets monthly. Meetings have been chaired alternately by the two wardens during the interregnum. Attendance is around 80%. There are currently 2 churchwardens, a deputy churchwarden, treasurer, secretary, 2 diocesan synod reps, 2 readers and 8 members.

Parish Administrator. Following the retirement of the vicar, we advertised for a church administrator, and Denis Gosden volunteered to assume that role. A church office was set up in the vestry, and a laptop and mobile telephone bought, exclusively for church admin use. This has been of huge help to the wardens. Contact details:

Church Office
Christ Church Totland Bay
Alum Bay New Road
Totland Bay
Isle of Wight PO39 0ES
Website: www.christchurchtotland.co.uk
E-mail: christchtotland@aol.com
Phone: 07582 861966

Parish Magazine. The magazine is printed monthly. 130 copies are produced.

Finances. The parish share for 2013 is £25,059.

Cash Flow Summary. Our Current Bank Account maintains a running balance of circa £11,000 and we hold approximately £30,000 on Deposit. The average monthly collection in the Church is £1,068 and this is made up of both loose cash and Gift Aid donations. In addition we receive an average monthly amount of £1,420 paid directly into the Bank Account under Planned Giving. We also receive other regular income from various items (eg Funerals, Stewardship etc) that averages out to approximately £150 per month. Therefore, circa £2,600 is our average monthly income. Our main expenditure is the monthly payment of £2,000 Parish Share instalment and £200 monthly Insurance Premium. Gas, Electricity and Water are all paid by Direct Debit. Incidental expenses have to be met with a vigorous Fund Raising Programme, which has added in excess of £3,200 over the past 12 month period. We are consolidating our Fund Raising activities and are looking to formulate a programme of activities that will increase the funds accumulated by an amount in excess of £4,000 per annum.

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

With the departure of the vicar, the Wardens and PCC were anxious to know how the congregation felt about their church, what they thought were its strengths and weaknesses, and how we could improve our work for God in the church and wider community. A questionnaire was passed out, and completed copies showed a huge range of views especially in the area of churchmanship, but there was a common feeling that we had rather lost our way. The strength of our church was highlighted as

the warm welcome and friendliness shown to newcomers and regulars alike; its weakness, some insularity ie lack of ability to reach out to the community and a sameness about the services.

In the year since these comments were made, we have tried hard to improve. With the absence of a vicar, there is more lay involvement in every aspect of church life. New and energetic people, most of them recently retired, have joined loyal and hardworking longstanding members all of whom show a real commitment to God's work at Christ Church in every aspect of church life. The rotas for cleaning, scripture reading, sidesmen, intercessions, greeters, stewards and flowers are all full. The Pastoral Care Team and other loving members in the congregation have made a positive difference to the lives of members struggling to cope at home. There is a real sense of purpose, a 'buzz' that had been sadly lacking for some time. The average congregation has increased in the past few months from 45 to 55, and the wardens and PCC feel uplifted by the practical and prayerful support of the whole congregation. The average age of the congregation is probably around 65. Our greatest regret is the total absence of young adults and children. Our Junior Church numbered over 35 just ten years ago, now there are none.

THE WAY AHEAD

We are confident that, with God's help and guidance, we can continue to move Christ Church forward. Working together, and supporting a House for Duty priest with prayer and practical action, we can show and spread Christ's love in the community of Totland Bay and in the development of the new benefice.