

Locks Heath

PARISH PROFILE



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND



Diocese
of Portsmouth



MOST PHOTOS IN THIS PROFILE @ LAURA SCOTTORN

BISHOP'S WELCOME

The Diocese of Portsmouth is in good heart and together we have heard God's call to Live, Pray and Serve the Kingdom of Christ, in and for the world.

If you sense the good Lord is calling you to join in with this beautiful work of retrieval and love we will be ready to receive you – all that you bring – in the days ahead.

With my prayers and blessing,

Jonathan Portsmouth



THE RT REV JONATHAN FROST,
BISHOP OF PORTSMOUTH



ARCHDEACON'S WELCOME

This post is an exciting leadership opportunity within and beyond the parish. St John's has achieved a huge amount through a long vacancy, and is looking for a priest and leader who can enable and energise the parish for the next step in its life and ministry. We're looking for a priest to give energy and direction to this parish, and to help it to fulfil its potential as a Resource church across the town and deanery. If you have a calling to enable a community and every person in it to find and respond to their calling and vocation, I hope you'll explore this role further.

The Western Wards collaborative ministry has come from a growing desire for the parish churches across the area to work together and serve their community as one. The person appointed will be a driving force in shaping and developing that ministry, and supporting the surrounding parishes. There is the possibility that this support might become more structured over the next few years.

Portsmouth diocese is delighted to be appointing clergy again, and is prioritising the places where there is greatest potential for ministry and mission, engaging with children, young people and young adults, and supporting ministry to older people through the resources of Anna Chaplaincy. Locks Heath is one of these priority places, and we believe that this appointment has the potential for a renewed engagement with the community across the whole area. We're committed to supporting ministry here, and look forward to exploring whether you could be the priest to lead and serve the parish into the next chapter of its life.

INTRODUCTION TO THE DIOCESE

The Diocese of Portsmouth stretches across south-east Hampshire and includes the whole of the Isle of Wight. It includes 139 parishes, from Botley in the west to Emsworth in the east, and from Blackmoor in the north to Ventnor on south side of the Isle of Wight. It includes diverse communities, ranging from the densely populated and relatively deprived parts of inner-city Portsmouth, to rural villages in Hampshire; and from a range of seaside towns on the Isle of Wight to suburban communities west of Fareham and Gosport. In total, it covers 420 square miles and has a population of 784,000.

The Diocese of Portsmouth has 170 churches, ranging from historic listed buildings to brand new, purpose-built churches. There are around 150 clergy serving in those churches and their parishes, around 50 of whom are self-supporting. There are also around 70 licensed lay ministers who help with leading services and pastoral work. Around 13,500 people regularly worship in our churches, on Sundays and during the week. Attendance numbers have been declining over the past 10 years, but there are particular congregations that have grown. Only a tiny number of churches have been closed in recent years.

Parishes and chaplaincies within the diocese are supported by a small diocesan team, based in Peninsular House, Portsmouth. These officers support parishes and church schools, administer clergy housing and stipends, manage its property portfolio, promote social justice, handle communications, manage safeguarding procedures, and run a variety of training courses. The Diocesan Secretary oversees these staff. Separate teams of staff are employed in the bishop's office and for the three archdeacons. There is no suffragan bishop.

The diocese includes 41 Church of England schools in south-east Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. These are still mostly schools funded by the local authority, but the diocese supports them with regard to governance and admissions, building projects, Christian ethos, RE and recruitment of headteachers. The education team supports schools across both Portsmouth



and Winchester dioceses, under the authority of a Joint Board of Education. Two schools on the Isle of Wight are joint Church of England/Roman Catholic schools.



Bishop Jonathan Frost was installed in March 2022, and has shared his vision for the diocese – a place where all are invited into a life-enhancing encounter with Jesus Christ. It should be a place where children, young people and young adults are given a particular priority; and where ministry to the elderly is supported by a network of Anna Chaplains, working in every locality. The vision is encapsulated by a vocational call to all Christians,

entitled **Live | Pray | Serve**, which has been supported by strategic funding from the national Church of England to promote the planting of new congregations and a network of pioneer ministers. You can read more about our vision and vocation at portsmouth.anglican.org/liveprayserve.

The Diocese of Portsmouth is one of the smallest dioceses in the Church of England, but has often “punched above its weight”, with senior staff and diocesan officers involved in the national Church, managing joint projects or implementing innovative ideas. Financially, the payment of parish share has always been good – but the recent Covid pandemic has resulted in some financial challenges.

There is a range of churchmanship across all traditions within the diocese, few parishes deliberately exclude themselves from deanery and diocesan initiatives, and our smaller, family feel means that most clergy and lay leaders know and respect each other.

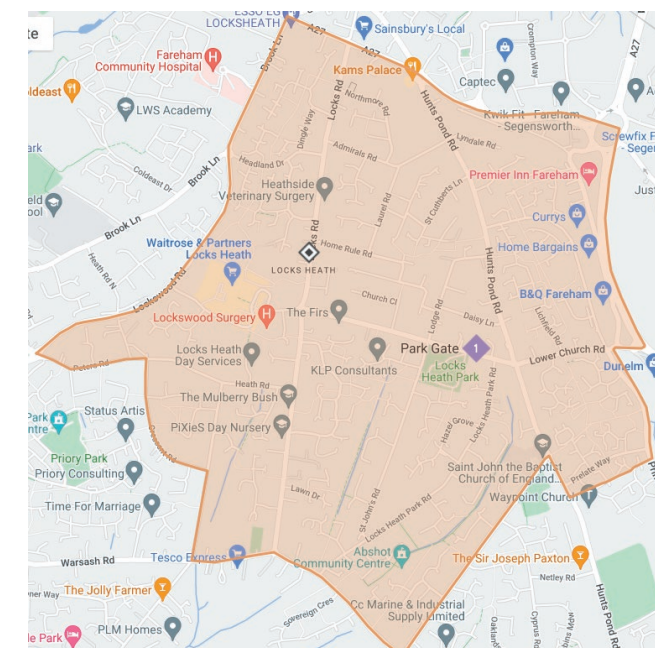


AN INTRODUCTION FROM THE AREA DEAN

Fareham Deanery comprises ten parishes from Portchester in the east to Sarisbury Green in the west. The Deanery reflects the broad spectrum of churchmanship, yet within a mutually respectful and supportive fellowship. Several of our churches are growing and mission is very much at the centre of our life.

The clergy chapter meets monthly for fellowship, mutual support and prayer often with an outward-looking focus and an exploration of ways of supporting the Bishop and Diocese.

The Deanery has a ‘plan’ which has evolved over a number of years and responds to changes of context and circumstance. However, at its heart is a vision of local Parishes developing strong relationships and sharing resources, gifts and skills in the service of God and the community.



Within that plan St John's Locks Heath is part of the ‘Western Wards Covenanted Partnership’ and we wish to explore with the Parish its relationships with Titchfield, Warsash and Sarisbury Green.

We envisage the development of a partnership built on trust and mutual respect and would expect the person appointed to this post to play their part in building such a relationship.

Rev Dr Ian Meredith
Area Dean



CHURCHWARDENS' WELCOME

We are delighted that you are reading our Parish Profile. Our hope and prayer is that you might find it intriguing, engaging, and compelling.

Locks Heath is a suburb of the Borough of Fareham. St John the Baptist church is an intergenerational parish church that uniquely in our area supports Christians from a broad set of traditions that include liturgical Anglican, evangelical and charismatic to worship and be fed spiritually.



St John's is a busy, friendly church, with a wide range of services, events, and activities both on Sundays and during the week. Our mission is to grow in faith and discipleship so that in turn we may be led by the Spirit to bring others to encounter the living God. The church family includes toddlers through to the elderly and whether at Messy Church, Monday

Café, home groups, or in our church services, we desire to be an open and welcoming community seeking to share the love of Jesus.

The church is in one of Fareham's most westerly wards and this term has been adopted to describe a developing Covenanted Partnership which is being set up with our three neighbouring

parishes; St Mary's Hook with Warsash, St Paul's Sarisbury Green and St Peter's Titchfield. The Western Wards Covenanted Partnership is integral to the Deanery Plan and there is growing enthusiasm as collaboration gains momentum through the development of missional support working alongside our brothers and sisters in Christ. The outline of the partnership is located at the end of this document.

St John's has an active PCC, some incredibly talented lay leaders, and an amazing operations team but we are seeking someone at this time who can encourage, enable, and most importantly help us envision and prioritise missional activities at St John's and take a leading role within the Western Wards Partnership.

In this profile we have tried to paint a clear picture of our church community. One which is authentic and inviting. Be assured that as a church we are praying that God will clearly call out our next Priest-in-charge to guide and help us to be a blessing to the community.



*Ian Coombs and Paul Barrow
Churchwardens*

DIRECTION OF TRAVEL

VISION STATEMENT

Reaching out with the love of Jesus to bring hope and change to our world

Life : Hope : Joy

St John's is a busy, sincere, and welcoming congregation. Through our doors each week we see an extraordinary range of ages from 4 weeks to 94 years.

A number of our congregation have worshiped here for 30 years or more, yet we frequently see new people engage and join with us: young mums with toddlers, families new to the area, others coming to retire near their children and a handful moving between local churches.

We are a richly diverse community of living faith and prayerful outlook. While our worship demonstrates different expressions and outworking of our faith, we seek to grow disciples and deepen love and service of the living Lord Jesus.



There are many things we think we do well, we also recognise that at times we can be challenging but it is because we care deeply. We desire to be vessels that the Holy Spirit can use to be a blessing to one another and more importantly to reach out to our local community with the Good News for those who have yet to follow Jesus.

Faithful service, prayerful ministries, uplifting worship, and selfless acts are all features of the church family, yet we recognise that we lack a cohesive visionary direction. God has blessed us with many gifts and there are a large number of us who engage in different forms of lay ministry.

On reflection we are seeking a Priest-in-charge at this time who will help us to:

1. discern a shared vision of how God wishes this church to grow and minister both within and beyond the parish. To help us understand how our spirituality, skills and interests can be honed to become more faithful, impactful, and missional.
2. grow younger as a community, especially reaching out towards teenagers and our under-represented 20s, 30s and 40s within our parish and the Western Wards. It will be essential to develop youth ministry and direct engagement with local schools.
3. grow older with grace and holiness as we seek to support the needs of elderly of our community, possibly through the development and support for a Western Wards Anna Chaplaincy.
4. be light and salt in our community, sharing the love, compassion, and good news of Jesus.





ROLE DESCRIPTION FOR AN INCUMBENT ***THE PARISH OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, LOCKS*** ***HEATH IN THE FAREHAM DEANERY***

ROLE DESCRIPTION FOR THE PRIEST-IN-CHARGE

A broad picture of St John the Baptist, Locks Heath and our relationship with other parishes in the Western Wards is given in this Parish Profile. This Role Description should be read in conjunction with our vision and priorities along with the details in this Profile. It should also be read in conjunction with the Diocesan Vision of Live | Pray | Serve, with particular emphasis on the following three dimensions:

- To encourage passionate personal spirituality
- To encourage a pioneering faith community
- To encourage prophetic global citizenship



The role is for an experienced parish priest with a proven track record who will lead, support, and nurture the people of Locks Heath and build on recent achievements to develop the mission of the Church in the community and ensure that our Spiritual and Missional needs are met.

We are looking for a priest who:

SPIRITUALITY

- Acknowledges God's call to discipleship for themselves and those among whom they minister
- Is a creative and imaginative spiritual leader, pointing others to Christ
- Can maintain a balance in their own daily spiritual life of prayer, the study of scripture, ministerial work, recreation, family, and friends



WORSHIP AND PREACHING

- Possesses the capacity to develop inspiring styles of worship which are attractive to different generations including families, children, and young people
- Applies the insight of Scripture to daily life and is able to communicate the Christian message effectively
- Is open minded and celebrates diversity, respecting, supporting, and contributing towards different forms of worship

LEADERSHIP AND COLLABORATION

- Has the ability to set out a vision for mission and ministry and works towards it, ensuring that through excellent communication the congregation travels with them
- Can discern the gifts and skills of others with a willingness to develop and use them
- Is committed to building relationships
- Understands employment matters and is experienced in managing volunteers and staff
- Seeks opportunities to collaborate in the Western Wards Covenanted Partnership for mutual growth and encouragement

DISCIPLESHIP, LEARNING AND NURTURE

- Has a commitment to nurture and develop the discipleship of all
- Has a willingness to take the lead in developing locally delivered training programmes such as Alpha and The Bible Course
- Can identify development and training opportunities for themselves and others
- Is able to support and encourage people of all ages and backgrounds to take an active part in church life

EVANGELISM AND CONCERN FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

- Recognises the call of Christ in their own life with a willingness to share their Christian conviction with others
- Enables others to articulate and share their faith



- Understands Fresh Expressions and other forms of pioneer ministry and has an appreciation of how these forms of ministry might become part of the Western Wards collaborative working
- A willingness and ability to build relationships and engage with the wider community
- Will help us become more sensitive to issues of social justice within and beyond our community

PASTORAL CARE AND SAFEGUARDING

- Is proactive in the delivery of safeguarding practice and policy
- Has a sensitivity for and understanding of the varied pastoral needs of the community
- Enables the provision of impactful pastoral care through oversight of ‘every-member pastoral care’ alongside other specialist teams such as the pastoral care and baptism preparation teams
- Is approachable, enjoys getting to know people and is an active listener

STEWARDSHIP AND PARISH ORGANISATION

- Is committed to working as part of a team
- Is a confident user of information technology including Office software, Churchbuilder, Worship Extreme/Presenter or has a willingness to develop abilities
- Can effectively chair meetings
- Can effectively prioritise their own workload and assist others to do the same

ECUMENISM AND LINKS WITH OTHER BODIES

- Is willing to take a leading role in the development of the covenanted partnership of the Western Wards churches
- Will fully participate in and contribute to the life of the deanery (including synod and chapter) and diocese (compulsory bullet point!)

WHAT OUR CHURCH FAMILY SAY ABOUT US

In 2020 we asked the congregation to describe St John's. This is a small selection of some of the comments:

“Showing the love of God through Christ in our actions in and outside the church building.”

“The rich diversity of people with disparate views and church experience.”

“Having a broad outlook to service structures, good communications and a strong church family.”

“We have a large number of very caring people at SJ with lots of different skills. I believe their work and ministry should be embraced and the aims and goals will be more easily achieved.”

“The warm welcome everyone is given and the friendliness of the people there, making you feel at home.”

“SJLH has great potential for growth both spiritually and numerically. I pray we seize the opportunity.”

“A body of faithful people, welcoming and flexible in outlook.”

“The so-willing volunteers, many of them, who give so much of their time.”

“Long-lasting spiritual love and companionship.”



MEET THE TEAM

CHURCH STAFF AND LEADERSHIP

The church has the following paid staff:

MIKE MORITZ
CURATE

Mike has been with us since 2019 so is into his fourth year and looking to move on soon. He currently has responsibility for ‘Small Groups’ and ‘Prayer’ and has taken on Alpha during the vacancy too. While regularly leading at both our principal Sunday services, he has been a key leader for the 11am Informal Service. With his wife Katie (a lay pioneer in training), they have been pioneering a range of projects such as Chiminea, a garden-based worship service.

HAZEL FOSTER
CHILDREN’S AND FAMILIES TEAM LEADER

20 hours per week

For the past three years, Hazel has been employed to lead Toddlers, Messy Church, and Sunday groups at St John’s. The role includes leading teams of volunteers to run groups for church families and members of our community, as well as events in St John’s Primary school. She also leads and speaks in services, as well as helping to lead worship on the piano at the Informal Service. Hazel attends PCC as an ex-officio member.

ABI ELSHAW
OPERATIONS MANAGER

25 hours per week (Monday to Friday)

Abi manages the staff (office and facilities) and office volunteers; the building (rentals and building use, maintenance, legal obligations, Health & Safety, licences, insurances, logistics, etc.); communications (correspondence, calls, emails, newsletters, website, GDPR). Abi attends PCC as an ex-officio member.



LIZ MORGAN
PRIEST-IN-CHARGE’S PA AND PCC SECRETARY

20 hours per week (Monday to Thursday)

Liz has been Priest-in-charge’s PA at St John’s since 2010. She can often be found fulfilling various roles within services and around the building. Her job involves being responsible for organising church services and the many volunteers who support and provide the wonderful family that is St Johns. She is also a co-leader of the Pastoral Care Team.

Other officers of the church:

PAUL BARROW
CHURCHWARDEN

Paul and his family have worshipped at St John’s since 1992. He is a retired HR Consultant. At St John’s he plays percussion and guitar in the band that hosts Spirit Café, and he is a Worship and Service Leader at the Informal Service.

IAN COOMBS
CHURCHWARDEN

Ian and his family have worshipped at St John’s since 1990. Throughout this time, he has been involved in youth work and leads and speaks at the Informal Service. He is a researcher at the University of Southampton.



ROGER PICKARD
VERGER

Roger supports the smooth running of services by thorough preparation of communion materials. He maintains a discrete watching brief over the church interior, the vestry, and grounds. On occasions he organises catering events and he is meticulous in his approach. He is also a listener and an unofficial pastoral carer looking out for people. When not at St John's Roger works both for M&S and in hospitality.

JENNY AND PHIL COUNDLEY
PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICERS

Jenny and Phil have been in the parish for over ten years and they bring to the role expertise as a former Detective Sergeant in the Police and a special needs teaching assistant.

The paid staff and wardens team meets each week and is primarily focussed on management and maintenance issues. The team works alongside the PCC, which meets monthly (except August).

The PCC comprises: priest-in-charge and curate; churchwardens (one as vice chair); 10 elected members; 3 Deanery Synod members; 2 co-opted members, one of whom is the Treasurer; and 2 ex officio members – Children and Families Team

Leader & Operations Manager.

Our income requires us to be registered with the Charities Commission and our elected PCC members act as the Trustees.

Other key roles:

- **Cleaner** – Michelle works 10 hours per week (Monday – Friday)
- **Organist** – Our long-term organist left in 2021 and to date we have not replaced him. The 9:30am Sunday worship is supported by a team of three organists. We have a music library of organ recordings which match our hymn book, but this resource has only been used on a couple of occasions.
- **Choir Leader** – our previous organist also acted as 'caretaker choir leader'. The choir is currently led by one of the choristers who also oversees hymn choosers and organist rotas.
- **Worship Leaders** – a group of four lead the worship of the 11am Informal Service
- **Service leaders and speakers** – we have around a dozen lay members who can lead services and deliver talks. Post-pandemic there has been increased lay-leadership within the 9:30am Sunday service.
- **Lay-readers** – we do not have any active lay readers

Lay leadership has always been a strength of St John's. Pastoral care, adult discipleship, small groups, youth and children's activities, buildings and maintenance, catering, administration, stewardship, and outreach are all areas





of church life led by lay members. One challenge is to grow more leaders from the younger families within the church.

RETIRED CLERGY

We are blessed with four retired clergy with Permission to Officiate. They play a huge part in supporting services and addressing pastoral needs. Their faithful and loving ministry is hugely appreciated but their capacity to serve will inevitably diminish with time. This highlights the need for us to develop more lay leaders to fulfil roles which do not require a priest.

REV CLIFF BANNISTER

Cliff Bannister and his wife Karen (Reader currently without PTO) have worshipped regularly at St John's since 2019 following Cliff's retirement after 33 years of parish ministry. His last parish was St Bartholomew and St Lawrence with St Swithun-upon-Kingsgate, Winchester, from where they moved to live nearer their family. During the vacancy Cliff has contributed to the format of Sunday services at 9.30am and has written a parish Advent Course.

REV DAVID ISHERWOOD

Anne and David moved to Locks Heath from Clapham just over 7 years ago. St John's is their local church which they find "a welcoming, purposeful, generous Christian community, and such an exciting congregation to be part of." David is chair of the Sarisbury Green Arts Society and together they engage with the arts, especially through membership of Chichester Festival Theatre.

REV JANE RICHARDS

Jane and her husband Dick moved to Locks Heath when they married in 1970 and joined St John's. Jane was a teacher, then a teacher training lecturer in Winchester before being made deacon in 1987, and ordained priest in 1993. Most of her ministry has been in hospital chaplaincy and working as an NSM in St John's. She also supports St Peter's Titchfield (a Western Wards church).

REV DAVID AND JAN WILSON

David and Jan came to St. John's in 2005 on retirement from St. Mary, Osterley. After a year's break, they joined in parish ministry as priest and reader. Jan stopped this in 2020 but continues to be involved in church life. David still celebrates and preaches monthly and plays the organ for the 9:30am service.





LIVING HERE

OUR COMMUNITY

The parish of St John the Baptist, Locks Heath is in Fareham a town located between Portsmouth and Southampton. The area has good transport links, including the A27 and M27 which link to the A3 and M3. There are railway connections to Southampton, Portsmouth, Gatwick Airport and London via Swanwick Station. Also, ferry services to the Isle of Wight and the continent are close by.

The parish has a popular district shopping centre which has two supermarkets, restaurants, a library and pub alongside other specialist shops. Along the eastern edge of the parish there are eight out-of-town superstores.

There are two primary schools in the parish, St John the Baptist CofE (Controlled) and Park Gate. We have good

relationships with them. The local area has a good selection of nursery, primary and secondary schools. Fareham, Southampton and Portsmouth have diverse Sixth Form provision and there are respected independent schools too.

There are no other churches in the parish, but we are less than a mile from Waypoint, a large Baptist Church; St Margaret Mary, a Roman Catholic church; and Duncan Road, an evangelical free church.

The local area provides opportunities for urban, country and coastal recreation. The Solent is a 30-minute walk away. Warsash offers opportunities for sailing and The New Forest and South Downs National Parks are short drives away.



THE VICARAGE

Completed in 1992 the vicarage is an attractive, modern, four-bedroom house adjacent to the church. It has a private drive, garage, parking space for four cars and a good-sized secluded garden with a lawn. A useful feature is the large private study suitable for small meetings, which is accessed from the front door but without entering the main vicarage.

A full description, with photographs is available at <https://www.stjohnslocksheath.org.uk/ppdocs/>.

APPENDICIES

CHURCH BUILDINGS

The church foundation stone was laid in 1885 after a small agricultural community raised funds to build a local place for worship. While the church is just over 125 years old it has been well maintained although the interior is looking dated. The church is asymmetric with a main aisle and one side aisle to the south. In some ways the church building is little changed since its construction. There are still pews in the nave, though the chancel has chairs which allows for greater flexibility. There is an organ and electronic piano which support services. There is a recently renewed audio-visual system with permanent projectors and screens. St John's is not a listed building.



During 2006, work was undertaken to rationalise floor levels in the chancel area to improve access, visibility and provide a more flexible space. This was initially covered by a temporary permission from the Archdeacon to create a simple dual level platform. The temporary platforms are still in use.

Over a long period, the interior layout and design of the church has been subject to prayerful and detailed reviews. One started around 2004 and paused after about 4 years. The subject was revisited by the PCC in 2020 when a firm of architects was appointed who have offered some initial recommendations. The PCC has been discussing options, but no firm plans have been agreed.

The church building is open to the community Monday to Friday, 9am to noon.



The Church Centre – was built onto the west end of the church 1998. With a range of meeting spaces and facilities across three floors. The Centre is home to the church office, our library, and other rooms used for meetings and youth work. The ground floor 'Grove Room' is connected to the nave via glazed doors and can seat up to 55 people. For the largest services, the Grove Room becomes an overflow venue. Adjacent there is a small kitchen. There are toilets on the ground floor. During the week the centre is used by both church and community groups. A lift makes all rooms, except the mezzanine room, accessible.

The Church Hall – was built in 1992. Located on the south side of the church it provides flexible accommodation on two floors. Downstairs – a foyer, choir vestry, toilets (including an accessible toilet), and a main hall which can accommodate up to 125 people. There is a well-equipped kitchen which was refurbished in 2014. Upstairs, there is a small prayer room and storage space.



There is an attractive glazed corridor linking the Church Hall to the Church Centre. As with the Church Centre, the Hall generates income from rental fees.

Garden and grounds – the church, church centre and hall complex is surrounded by attractive grounds and two gravel car parks (capacity for 36 cars). The area in front of the church was successfully redesigned through a joint project with Brookfield Community School. The church has no graveyard. The grounds are used for after church refreshments in the summer, alfresco services, fetes, and picnics.

The Garden of Remembrance is a small and secluded area between the Centre and the Hall. It is an attractive and peaceful environment providing a place for the scattering of ashes and a remembrance wall.

ACCESSIBILITY

Access to the church, church hall and centre is possible without navigating steps. In the nave some pews have been removed to allow for wheelchair users to sit within the body of the congregation. An induction loop system supports most of the nave and the chancel area. However, the chancel is only accessed via steps and while a portable ramp is available for those who need it this solution is not ideal. The side aisle is inaccessible to wheelchairs and larger prams.

The lift makes the church centre fully accessible. However the only accessible toilet is in the church hall.

OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

Locks Heath developed in the Victorian era as an agricultural area of market gardening renowned for growing strawberries for the London market. While there was a gradual urbanisation, it was in the 1980s that all the remaining agricultural land was redeveloped as housing and the population rapidly grew. The church, which had been close to the crossroads at the heart the community, became isolated as the centre moved towards the purpose-built Locks Heath Shopping Village constructed half a mile away.

As the population grew, so did the congregation which envisaged and paid for the new hall and centre. So, we are no longer a ‘village church’ surrounded by fields, nor are we a ‘High Street church’, but rather a church around which a largely affluent suburban community has grown.



Today the parish has around 5,400 households with an estimated 12,000 population. While our parish has no land available for significant new housing developments there are developments underway in all the neighbouring parishes.

OUR MISSION FIELD

In 2019, our PCC commissioned the Community Audit which supplied detailed information about the parish’s demographic. The full report is available from the supplementary documents here: <https://www.stjohnslocksheath.org.uk/ppdocs/>. The Community Audit tells us that the three largest social groups within the parish are; established families living up-market lifestyles in detached houses (31%), young couples or singles following their careers and bringing up children (18%) and older people who



are comfortably off enjoying their retirement (16%). Less visible perhaps are the one-in-twenty who are elderly but who are reliant upon financial and/or practical support.

The report has provided a better understanding of our area. We have been looking for areas of unmet need in our community, so that we can better ‘go out’ to serve, transform and bring hope. While analysis of the 2019 audit suggests

deprivation is low, we are aware that due to the pandemic, financial instability and the energy crisis there are increasing points of need locally particularly with young families and some retired. This has led us to support the Fareham and Gosport Basics Bank and initiating a scheme to provide meals for struggling local families during the school holidays.



We are also aware of the need for the church to be seen as “a place for people like me”. The church needs to grow in a manner that closely resembles the demographic of our community, giving us a much better opportunity to share the Good News of Jesus and reach out into parts of our community that we currently do not touch.

OUR OUTREACH

Getting people in the community to a point where they are willing to engage with the Christian faith is always a challenge. We often use social activities and major festivals, to which the



community are drawn, as an entry point for inviting people to more spiritually focussed activities such as Alpha. Our ‘fringe’ is an extremely important group. The focus on young families led by Hazel our Children and Families Team Leader has enabled significant outreach to this demographic, primarily through the weekly Toddlers Group and monthly Messy Church. We also have children’s groups on Sundays, strong connections with our local CofE Primary School, some nursery schools, and Scouts.

While we have growth with our children’s and families work, we are aware of the need to develop our offering to youth. To this end through prayer and meeting with a member of the school’s staff, we are seeking to develop links with the local secondary school, Brookfield Community School. The Western Wards plan identifies the need for a Youth Worker as a shared resource. We see this as a priority.

Another area with growth potential is ministry to older people both in the church family and beyond. With that in mind we have re-envisioned the Pastoral Care Team, and the PCC have agreed to consider working towards the creation of an Anna Chaplaincy network within Western Wards and maybe other denominations. The PCC is waiting for the new priest-in-charge before taking this further.

OUR CHURCH MINISTRIES

SUNDAYS

We have two Sunday morning worshipping communities with distinctive spiritual expressions. While both services are thriving and growing, they have yet to return to pre-covid numbers.

9:30AM HOLY COMMUNION

An Anglican service of Common Worship Holy Communion. The sung worship is led by a robed SATB choir with organ, and robed clergy. The service is streamed each week for those who cannot attend in person. Adults: 73, Children: 4, Live Stream: 13 (September 2022 average).

11AM INFORMAL WORSHIP

A service of contemporary worship led by a worship band and unrobed clergy or laity. First Sunday: All-age worship followed by a simple shared lunch, third Sunday: Holy Communion. Children's groups meet weeks 2-5. Adults: 49, Children: 17 (September 2022 average)

The Sunday services usually follow the same lectionary readings and sometimes share preachers. There is a significant contribution from lay-leadership in terms of speaking, reading the Word and leading prayers. We allow children to receive Holy Communion alongside parents.

MIDWEEK

10AM WEDNESDAY HOLY COMMUNION

This is a popular mid-week said communion service. Adults: 30 (September 2022 average)

COMBINED SERVICES

Our worshipping congregations combine for major feast days and other special service. Over the past 12 months we have

had combined services on Christmas Day, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, PCC Commissioning Sunday, Patronal Festival (June), Harvest and Remembrance Sunday. At the main festivals we involve our local CoE primary school and the Scouts, Beavers, and Squirrels when practical and possible. In terms of style, the combined services are developed through collaboration between the leaders of both Sunday services.



COMMUNITY FRIENDLY SERVICES

Some services are particularly popular and tend to draw in members of our local community. These include: The Christmas Service of Lessons and Carols, Christingle, Christmas Eve Family Celebration, Harvest Festival, Remembrance Sunday, and the All-Saints Service. During the period of mourning for HM Queen Elizabeth the church hosted three special remembrance services which attracted many visitors.

ELECTORAL ROLL

At the April APCM our electoral roll had 276 members, an increase of 6 over the previous year. Around this time, we invited 33 newcomers to share in one of our regular Newcomers' Afternoon Tea. Further details of the 'Statistics for Mission' are available here: <https://www.stjohnslocksheath.org.uk/ppdocs/>.

OCCASIONAL OFFICES

Post-covid, we have seen a rising number of weddings (weekend and midweek), funerals (primarily for church members), and baptisms (at both Sunday services). Our retired clergy often officiate at weddings, funerals, and the interment of ashes.

CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRY

As a church we are committed to growing this ministry by putting in disproportionate resources. Over the past 2 years we have seen an increase in young families coming into the wider church community via Toddlers, Messy Church, and Alpha.

SUNDAYS

Alongside the 9:30am Holy Communion (first Sunday of the month):

- Activities for children with an occasional contribution to the service.

Alongside the 11am Informal Service (all except the first Sunday of the month):

- **Scramblers**
For pre-school children to year 1. Encountering Jesus through the Bible, singing, prayer, activities and games in an age-appropriate way.



- **Explorers**
For children in years 2 – 5 Encountering Jesus through the Bible, singing, prayer, activities and games in an age-appropriate way.
- **Encounters**
A group which restarted in September 2022 following a covid-enforced break. This group for young people in years 6 and secondary school provides a safe space for fellowship, teaching, and discussion.

Sunday evening 7pm

- **Connect**
A mainly social group for those in years 6 and above to help wrap up the weekend. After Christmas 2022 it is planned to run Youth Alpha for this group, and we will be inviting others from Western Wards churches to join in.

MIDWEEK

- Toddlers (Weekly)

A weekly gathering of babies, toddlers and pre-schoolers accompanied by their parents/grandparents or carers. A safe place for play for little ones with chat and friendship for all finishing with, a short Bible story and nursery rhymes.

- Messy Church (Monthly)

Children welcome with accompanying grown up. Activities, games, craft, all based around a Bible story, finishing with a short worship time and tea together.



SEASONAL ACTIVITIES

- Messy Mondays

Held every Monday morning during the summer school holidays. A fun place for church and community families to meet and join in with activities based on a Bible story.

- Easter

Depending on where Easter falls in the school holidays, this is always a great time to offer something to families in our local community, whether an Easter Egg hunt or Messy Easter celebration

- Nativity Experience

Using the church and grounds to invite families to interact with the Christmas story in an original manner.

- Uniformed Organisations

We have links with some uniformed groups through members of our congregation. We have organised special events for these groups to participate in including Remembrance, Christmas, and the Queen's funeral.

SCHOOLS

LINKS WITH ST JOHN THE BAPTIST COFE PRIMARY SCHOOL

St John's has excellent links with St John the Baptist Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School. Members of our Congregation have active roles as foundation and ex-officio governors sitting on the Christian Character Committee which discusses all aspects of the Christian nature of the school; leads assemblies and develops Prayer spaces twice a term. Others volunteer by participating in the pupil coaching and mentoring scheme. The school comes to church to celebrate big Christian festivals. The incumbent is contracted to act as an ex-officio governor or chaplain at the school

LINKS WITH BROOKFIELD COMMUNITY SCHOOL (11-16 COMPREHENSIVE)

Prayer meetings have been undertaken recently to seek God's will for the youth of our community. There is huge potential for this area of our outreach.

WHAT NEXT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE?

It has been exciting to see God at work in this area of our Church community. We have seen growth not only in numbers of children attending but in raising up new leaders and producing many opportunities for us to engage positively with the love of Jesus to families in our community. There is still much to be done. Youth remain on our hearts as an area requiring significant input, along with developing new ways to engage with some of the older primary school aged children.



PRAYER

Prayer is central to personal and community spiritual journeys. At St John's prayer is encouraged through:

- Prayer Chain
A telephone and social network of committed individuals who undertake intercessory prayer for individuals in response to identified needs
- Prayer in our services
We name people in response to prayer requests
- Monthly Ladies Prayer Breakfast
What it says on the tin
- Prayer in the Attic
A weekly informal gathering in our Prayer Attic
- Occasional Prayer Events
Held in the church building on an evening where the needs of the church are shared
- Western Wards Prayer Services
A cycle of prayer to which all from the Western Wards churches are invited.
- Home Groups
Several home groups recently completed Pete Greig's Prayer Course

Before the pandemic a Prayer Ministry Team offered prayer for individuals at the 9:30am service. We are working toward reinstating them. At the 11am service there is a tradition of informal intercessory prayer. However, we recognise that both these ministries require further development.



FINDING OUT ABOUT FAITH

The Alpha Course is our primary tool for helping people explore the essentials of the Christian faith. We usually run the course three times during the year both as lunch time and evening activities. Some courses are held on site and others in people's homes. Alpha is run by both clergy and lay leaders.

Currently St John's is helping our neighbouring Western Wards church St Peter's Titchfield run their first Alpha course with course members attending from all four churches. The course is welcoming 30+ people and is a mix of existing church members and new contacts. Concurrently a second Alpha course is being held in a home especially for those who may not be attracted to meeting in a church building.

For those who have completed Alpha and want to grow more, we put on the Bible Society's 'The Bible Course'. This year we also offered the 'Making Disciples' course from Essential Christian for more mature Christians.

SMALL GROUPS

SMALL GROUPS/DISCIPLESHIP

We know small groups are a great place to grow friendships and grow in faith as we support each other practically and spiritually.

Within a network of a dozen small groups currently over 100 people share fellowship and grow in faith. Our small groups are free to study what they wish, but at certain times such as Advent or Lent we may suggest a church-wide study and encourage people who are not already part of a regular group to join one.



PASTORAL CARE

We have recently reviewed, renewed and re-envisioned the work of our Pastoral Care Team. It is currently led by a team of three, but it would be expected that the priest-in-charge would join the leadership group.

There are three broad thrusts to our Pastoral Care strategy.

1. The development of every-member pastoral care. This is an acknowledgement that everyone attending St John's has a responsibility to care for and support those who they encounter. Be they sat alongside in the pew, in the home group or within any groups they attend. This concept needs further discussion and development.
2. We have a dedicated Pastoral Care Network which is deployed by the leadership group to support individuals as needs arise. This group is small and dedicated but we know that it needs to grow.
3. The church has specialist groups such as the Baptism Preparation Team, Hearing Helpers and Monday Café which offer prime opportunities for pastoral care.

Several retired clergy also play a key role in our pastoral care. We are looking at ways to extend and grow the lay team, especially from the younger members of the church family. Our goal is that pastoral care is seen to be natural expression of discipleship and that we find new ways of offering this to our local community.

PCC

During the period of vacancy, the PCC continues to move the church forward. In the vacancy period they have:

- Agreed in principle to support a 'Covenanted Partnership' in the Western Wards
- Agreed alongside diocesan priorities to support Anna Chaplaincy at St John's and within the Western Wards; however, we are waiting for a new incumbent before taking further steps.
- Approved 'Hearing Helpers' – a new initiative supporting older people with their hearing aids which is due to commence in January 2023
- Approved modifications to the Audio system and 2 new projectors in the church
- Support for Alpha in Western Wards – support to train-up local churches in the hosting of Alpha
- Conducted a comprehensive review of the 9:30am Holy Communion Service
- Conducted a comprehensive review of the 11am Informal Service
- Refreshed our Pastoral Care Leadership Team
- Established a team to review the Welcome that we give at St John's Church
- Established an Eco group

The PCC's current priorities are:

- Investigating 'Holiday Grub Club' to provide meals for struggling families – working towards a trial during February 2023 half term
- Empowering two teams to oversee the implementation of the service review recommendations
- Reordering the church – the next stage is to invite the architect back to lead a Workshop Day for the PCC and other key church members

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Away from our regular worship there is a plethora of more social activities:


- **Christmas Tree Festival**
An occasional event where church members and local groups are invited to decorate one of 60 trees which are put up in and around the church. This third festival is being held in December 2022.
- **Eco Group**
A small team focussing on Eco Church issues.
- **Mainly4Men**
A monthly gathering for men of all ages. Curry and beer is followed by talks on a wide variety of subjects. For example, the October speaker runs the Fareham and Gosport Basics Bank. Occasionally, this becomes Mainly4Everyone for special event such as 'Christmas Curry & Carols'
- **Monday Café**
A weekly Monday morning drop-in for anyone in the community.

- **Spirit Café**
A monthly Saturday evening of musical entertainment, fronted by our 'house band' Cahoots. This currently meets in the church building and is well attended. The Spirit Café audience has raised a large amount of money for charity over the years.
- **The Fellowship**
A popular monthly meeting, mainly attended by our seniors but welcoming visitors who are not regular church attenders. The meeting has prayer, a guest speaker and refreshments.
- **The Miracle**
A musical retelling of the Easter story performed by an all-age cast drawn from St John's and the Western Wards. Co-written by a member of St John's, it will be performed in 2023.
- **Walking Group**
A weekly local walk open to everyone.

Other teams that support the maintenance and worship at St John's:

- **Baptism Preparation Team**
A team of one at present! But Rachael does invaluable work meeting with families with adults or children
- **Choir**
Meets in church each Friday evening to practise for 9:30am Sunday morning.
- **External Giving Team**
A small group who determine how our tithe is distributed
- **Gardening Team**
Who help to keep the church grounds attractive
- **Maintenance Team**
Who look after the church fabric and grounds
- **Sunday refreshments**
Served between the two main services. Once a month, there is a free lunch





following the 11am service. Mid-week – those attending 10.00 am Holy Communion (around 30 regulars) have refreshments, fellowship and a good natter in the Grove Room after the service

- **VPS and Sound Team**

Who look after sound and video projection in services

- **Welcomers**

A large team of regular attendees who support the Sunday services

- **Worship Team**

Meets weekly at various times in preparation for the 11am Sunday service.



FINANCES

At the start of 2021 the general fund balance was £1,999 and the PCC reserve fund £2,103. During 2021 these reserves increased very slightly to £2,144 and £2,603. Total income to the general fund was £194,221 just sufficient to cover our £194,075 expenditure. The situation is similar at the end of September 2022 with the general fund at £2,124 and the PCC reserve fund unchanged at £2,603.

In addition to the working reserves there is £39,181 in the Special Projects fund designated for capital projects. This is from legacies and donations given for other than general expenses. (£14,082 of this is committed to complete the AV system upgrade). There is also £6,250 in the Church Renewal fund donated to seed future re-ordering of the church. In June 2022 we held a Gift Day to raise funds towards our special projects. We raised more than £18,000 which by the year end will contribute to repair of faulty hall lights, removal of a dead yew tree, resurfacing part of the car park and fixing a roof.

The Youth Ministry fund (restricted), stands at £39,182. The major call on this is the salary of our Children and Families Team Leader and costs related to youth and children's activities. The salary will be largely covered by pledged giving this year: most of the current pledges end in 2023, but we are confident that as youth and children's work flourishes, it will continue to attract funding.

Regular giving to the general fund last year was £118,380 gift aided and £9,966 non gift aided. At present a total of 112 of our regular givers do so through the Parish Giving Scheme. The church meets its parish share which is currently £117,808. The next biggest item of expenditure is staff costs of £34,068. The latest examined accounts (for 2021) can be viewed here: <https://www.stjohnslocksheath.org.uk/ppdocs/>.

CHARITABLE GIVING

St John's is a generous church and for some years we have followed a policy of 'tithing', in which we give away 10% of our disposable income (total income minus parish share). This is allocated and organised by our 'External Giving



Team’ and endorsed by the PCC. We were able to honour our planned tithe last year (£7,000) despite a severe drop in our rental income. We also have a tradition of giving all of our Christmas ‘plate’ donations to charities. Last Christmas we raised over £1,200 for charities and an additional £775 in supermarket gift vouchers for families with young children from St John’s school.

RENTAL INCOME

The following groups hire our Church Hall or rooms in the Church Centre. They provide around £12,000 income each year.



THE WESTERN WARDS COVENANTED PARTNERSHIP

The Western Wards Partnership is a clustering of diverse churches to the west of Fareham in the Diocese of Portsmouth.

Church	Incumbent	Draft Deanery Plan
St John’s, Locks Heath	In vacancy	1.0 Full time incumbent
St Mary’s, Hook with Warsash	0.5 – A couple in ministry	No change
St Paul’s, Sarisbury Green	In vacancy	0.5 incumbent
St Peter’s, Titchfield	In vacancy	0.5 incumbent or 0.4 House for Duty

Broadly, the aims of the Partnership are:

- To deepen discipleship of individual worshippers
- To impact our communities
- To facilitate numerical growth in the partnership churches by joint mission initiatives in the Western Wards
- To foster closer co-operation and co-ordination between the partnership churches in order to support each other

This includes the following:

- Administration of occasional offices
- Anna Chaplaincy to offer spiritual care in later life
- Children, Families and Young people
- Combined services or celebrations when this is appropriate
- Combined study and small groups including Lent groups
- Communication including websites and social media
- Eco Church initiatives
- General Administration
- Joint courses such as Making Disciples and Alpha
- Outreach and support for the communities we live in
- Pastoral Care
- Pioneer ministry to develop new ways of doing things, expanding the growth and reach of the local Church
- Prayer for each other
- Safeguarding

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Two years ago, at the beginning of our vacancy, we completed a consultation with the church family. While there were many positive comments, some concerns were raised

concerning a perceived 'lack of togetherness' and 'a need to build a stronger sense of unity'. This is perhaps one consequence of having two different worshipping traditions alongside each other on a Sunday morning, while perhaps not engaging with each other as much as some wished.

The PCC took on the challenge and agreed to review how we welcome and worship at St John's in ways that both support our existing members while being open and attractive to newcomers. We believe we have moved on since 2020 and have made great strides in improving how we work together. However, we recognise that we are on a journey which has yet to reach a destination.

As part of the body of Christ in Locks Heath, our mission is to reach out to our neighbours sharing with them the unconditional love of Jesus. We want to be a genuinely inclusive church, recognising our weaknesses, cherishing our differences but to 'be perfectly united in mind and thought' (1 Corinthians 1:10). We pray that this shared approach will help shape our



aspirational journey towards becoming a truly diverse, growing and vibrant parish church.

We believe that we will be enriched through active engagement in the Western Wards Covenanted Partnership. This 'coming together' needs to be carried out purposefully and sensitively, in a way that releases and enables potential from the wider group, whilst retaining respective parish church identities and strengths.

We delight when people hear the good news of Jesus and are drawn to follow him. We want our church to support this mission through flourishing and varied worship, relevant outward looking groups and intriguing activities. We aspire to be recognised as loving, enthusiastic Christians who as living sacrifices make a difference across our community and beyond, reaching out with the love of Jesus to bring Life, Hope and Joy.

Ian Coombs and Paul Barrow
Churchwardens



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THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND