

# East Medina

PROFILE



THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND



Diocese  
of Portsmouth



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# BISHOP'S WELCOME

I am delighted you are seeking to discern whether Jesus is calling you to serve with His beautiful people in Whippingham, East Cowes and Wootton. Be assured of our prayers in the diocese for you and those you love as you step into a time of discerning.

The Diocese of Portsmouth is a community of communities focused and centred in Jesus, and seeking the Father's heart of love for the world. We shall be praying for you as you discern your next step of faith in response to God's faithfulness.

With love, in Christ,



THE RT REV JONATHAN FROST,  
BISHOP OF PORTSMOUTH

*'As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.'*

*Colossians 3: 12-13*

*a Rejuvenating community of Jesus-centred, Kingdom-seeking disciples*



# WELCOME

A very warm welcome from the Whippingham with East Cowes, and Wootton, plurality – affectionally known also as the East Medina plurality. We value your interest in our parishes and ask you to pray for us and with us. This profile is offered as an aid to those seeking to discern whether they are called to be considered for appointment as our next incumbent. We commit, with God's help, to nurture the faith and the future ministry of our new leader.



# INTRODUCTION

The East Medina Missional Plurality has been recently formed occupying the north-central section of the Isle of Wight. It consists of the United Benefice of St Mildred's at Whippingham and St James's at East Cowes, which has recently joined with the neighbouring parish of St Edmund's and St Mark's at Wootton Bridge. We enjoy regular worship and our three congregations, although small, are slowly growing and are made up predominantly of local people. We have an ambitious roster of church events across the parishes and aim to be welcoming, cheerful, and eager to live our lives in the light of Christ.



In terms of organisation, we are a relatively new plurality. The new incumbent would have the exciting opportunity to bring its constituent parishes into an even closer Partnership and to lead a ministry team in taking the churches forward into a new future. It is important to note that the churchwardens and the PCCs are fully committed to meeting the challenges presented by taking this new plurality into dynamic growth. A period of

consolidation and thoughtful reflection and prayer will be essential. Our churchwardens and PCC teams are no strangers to hard work and are wholly mindful of the need to support the new incumbent and their team, embrace change, and move forward in the Spirit.

## **VISION STATEMENT**

Believing in Jesus Christ as the source of our hope and salvation, we are called to:

- live our lives in ways that are formed by his life, death, resurrection, ascension, and coming again
- pray, on our own and together in community, for the growth and caring of the Kingdom and serve the people among whom we live and work, caring for young and old, strong and weak, rich and poor.

We aspire for the East Medina Plurality to be a healthy, growing mission area that proclaims the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in thought, word, and deed, both within our congregational activities and out in the wider community. Across the parishes there is a keen desire to build upon existing church-based and outreach projects as well as spearhead new avenues of mission and evangelism, particularly amongst young people and families.



# OUR CHURCH LIFE

Regular Sunday services are held in all churches across the mission area and thanks to the support of our retired clergy, Holy Communion is held weekly. The Common Worship Holy Communion Order One Booklet is used for all Sunday Services. We are blessed with faithful PtO clergy as well as devoted lay worship leaders who conduct services for All-Age Worship and Morning Worship. These Sunday services are important to the congregations across the plurality both as an act of prayer and worship as well as fostering a sense of community. The plurality comes together on fifth Sundays for Holy Communion. This is rotated around the parishes. There are also several plurality services held during Holy Week and to mark key days such as Ash Wednesday and Ascension Day.



St Edmund and St Mark provide Café Communion and an All-Age Brunch, as well as BCP Communion on the first Sunday of the month and most Wednesdays, as well as Evensong twice a month. All churches have refreshments after the service and the importance of this connection with the church community is vital, especially amongst the older members of the congregations. However, we also think this is important in fostering multi-generational connections and strengthening our communities within and across the different parishes.

St Edmund's is open daily for private prayer and reflection.

As a plurality, we are united by our desire to strengthen our church worship to deepen our relationship with God and seek ways for his Kingdom to grow in our own lives and the lives of the community around us.

## **BIBLE AND PRAYER**

St Mildred 's and St James' have an active fellowship group meeting fortnightly to share our journey of faith together, through study, prayer and thoughtful fellowship. Lay lead Celtic evening prayer is occasionally held outside the church, overlooking the countryside and the river.

St Edmund's and St Mark's hold a weekly Discussion group which includes a time of prayer and Bible focussed discussion. During Lent a weekly prayer service is held in St. Mark's coffee lounge.

This is an area of ministry which we want to develop, with an eye to encouraging a deeper understanding of God and promoting a Jesus-centred life to as many of our congregation as we can reach.

## **SAFEGUARDING**

Safeguarding has been a real focus for all parishes over the last few years. Each parish now has a range of safeguarding related policies in place and relevant training has been undertaken for all key roles based on Portsmouth's training matrix. Risk assessments for activities are prepared and approved by each PCC. The Diocesan Dashboard is regularly updated. St Mark's is regularly used for Diocesan training courses on the Island

## **ECUMENICAL LINKS**

Churches Together is active in East Cowes and Whippingham and a small committee meet regularly to organise various events during the year. Prayer Breakfasts are held several times a year in different churches. There is a Walk of Witness on Good Friday in East Cowes. In the summer a BBQ is held in St Mildred's orchard. An Ecumenical Remembrance Service is held for the town in St James' as is the Town Carol Service in early December. A group also goes Carol Singing into Care homes in East Cowes.

# MUSIC

There are enthusiastic and capable contributions across the plurality regarding music in services. St Mark's has a committed small choir who sing regularly at Holy Communion services led by a music director and organist.

St James' has two volunteer organists who cover most services. Recorded music is used at other times. Currently, at St Mildred's hymns are accompanied by CDs at the main service on Sundays. At the joint 'plurality services', held a few times a year, on some occasions a choir is brought together.

At non-Eucharistic services, hymns or worship songs are provided, depending on the nature of the service. There are enthusiastic musicians across the plurality so it might be possible to coordinate music more effectively across the plurality and draw parishes closer together while respecting each parish's tradition.

Also based within the plurality is Cantus Vesperi, a flourishing and peripatetic small choral ensemble with membership drawn from singers across the Island. It provides regular services of Choral Evensong and seasonal carol services at several churches across the Deanery. The choir is now led by the organist of Wootton parish and rehearses at St Edmund's twice a month



# HOW WE ENGAGE CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

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We believe strongly in the need to rejuvenate our congregations and seek to encourage families and young people to come into the church community. Teddy Club is run by members of St Mildred's congregation in St James's church hall, both churches coming together to provide a place for mums, dads, and carers to meet and bring their babies and toddlers.

The East Cowes Scout and Cub group are affiliated to St James, and the congregation have voiced that they would like to see more young people in the church.

St Mildred's runs a Sunday School during their All-Age Worship service. Volunteers from St Mildred's also provide the backbone of leadership for Rock Solid, a monthly ecumenical youth club for younger teenagers on a Friday night in East Cowes, which has grown in popularity. The sessions are held in Holy Cross' Church Hall.

St Edmund's and St Mark's Sunday Brunch service is particularly focussed on children and their families. The Christingle service, as well as Mothering Sunday and Good Friday (amongst others) are also planned with children and families in mind. Activities are provided for children at all other services.

The plurality puts a great emphasis on this part of our church life, seeing these groups as stepping stones on the path which leads children and young people into a fuller participation in church activities and services. We aim in the long-term to try and help them become core members of the church, rather than on the periphery.

All parishes have good relationships with their local primary schools, and this is something which has great potential to be built upon by an enthusiastic mission leader. Across the plurality there is a healthy list of baptisms and



weddings for 2026 and 2027, to which we hope to welcome and encourage participants as part of young families' journey towards faith.

There are so many people in our parishes that we are not reaching with the Good News of the Kingdom. We are looking for someone who can help us develop this work further.



# HOW WE ENGAGE WITH OUR OLDER RESIDENTS

In common with the general parish landscape across the country, our congregations are mainly comprised of devoted Christians who are older or elderly. They are the worshippers who attend regularly, and they are the volunteers that run all the events that make up church life. They are the people that keep our churches open and beautiful, and they are the people that provide refreshment and entertainment at church gatherings.

St James' has a Lay Pastoral Assistant who takes Holy Communion to the infirm. There is also a monthly Friendship Guild.

During the winter months St Mildred's opens its church centre on two days a week as a warm hub. It is open for five hours a day offering refreshments, especially for the elderly in the community.

St Edmund's and St Mark's run the Elephant Club dementia group. The monthly Café Communion is deliberately timed for late morning, so that those who find early rising more difficult, can attend. A member of St Edmund's and St Mark's is licensed as an Anna Chaplain and, together with a lay worship leader and a member of the congregation, takes regular services at local care homes.

We are a welcoming and inclusive group of people and feel strongly that a thriving and Jesus-loving community should cherish all its members whatever their age, recognizing all the gifts we have been given in the service of God.



# HOW WE ENGAGE WITH OUR WIDER COMMUNITIES

St James' holds monthly coffee mornings, a summer fête, a Christmas bazaar and the six-day annual Jigsaw Puzzle Festival in August, which attracts visitors from across the globe.

At St Mildred's there is a strong volunteer body which opens the community centre four days a week throughout the summer for refreshments and welcomes the thousands of visitors that pass through the church each year. There are several cream tea Sundays, with musical entertainment during the summer months, and a May fair with dog show. St Mildred's also holds a Christmas Tree Festival in December.

*The Bridge* magazine is produced ten times a year by St Edmund's and St Mark's. This is distributed to every house in the village by several volunteers. In addition, there is Mark's Brothers monthly breakfast club for men in the community. The Friends of St Edmund's is an active Charitable Trust raising funds for the maintenance of the building. The committee has members from the parish and the local community.



# OUR CHURCHES



**St James's Church, East Cowes** dates from 1831, originally it was a Chapel of Ease to Whippingham Parish Church. East Cowes was formed into a separate parish in 1843. The church is Grade II listed. The East Cowes War Memorial, which is also Grade II listed, is in the churchyard. A service is held each year at the memorial on Remembrance Day at 11am.

**St Mildred's Church Whippingham** is one of a tiny band of small village churches which have become closely linked with neighbouring Royal residences and therefore have a very great many beautiful, interesting and historical features. This site has been a place of worship since at least Norman times and was frequented by Queen Victoria when in residence at Osborne House on the Isle of Wight. The very fabric of our church is rich in royal history and heritage.

The church volunteers run a wonderful service for visitors and coach parties throughout the summer months, opening the coffee shop and providing tours of the church and churchyard. Hundreds of people pass through the church



and community centre each week in the tourist season, and this is at present an untapped opportunity for spreading God's Word.

St Mildred's is delighted to hold an eco-church silver award.





**The Parish Church of St Edmund's** is of Norman origin dating from 1087 and was originally the Manor Church. It has a normal capacity of about 40 to 50. First Sunday Holy Communion, Wednesday Communion and Evensong services are held here. St Mark's is larger, built in 1909, and holds most of the services and community events.

**St Mark's Church** was built in the early 1900s, rededicated in 1970 and consecrated as a Parish Church in 1984. It has a capacity of 150 people. Pews were replaced by chairs in 2007 to create a flexible space to allow for a variety of worship patterns holding most of the services and community events. It is home to a skateboard school, probably the only church to do so!

The two churches have recently registered as eco-churches and an action plan has been agreed.



# LIVING HERE

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The Isle of Wight is home to about 140,000 souls. It has a stunning coastline and beaches, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which has been given a UNESCO Biosphere rating and historical interest in the way of Carisbrooke Castle, Osborne House and Brading Roman Villa alongside attractive towns such as Yarmouth and Cowes. It has thousands of holiday makers enjoying its climate, its wonderful local produce and its tourist attractions like Tapnell Farm and Blackgang Chine. Its annual music festival welcomed 50,000 ticket holders this year. It is undoubtedly a unique place to live. However, the Island faces challenges to its population from expensive Solent crossings that place limits on working options, a heavy reliance on seasonal work, and limited investment from major employers. That said, it has benefited recently from a developing marine engineering industry and Ascensos, the customer management outsourcing company opening in Cowes. The population ranges from second homeowners and retired people, through to local young families and people relocating from the mainland. It is an eclectic and inspiring community which is both a blessing and a challenge.

East Cowes is a thriving small town, with a population of around 5,000. There is a small shopping area, a supermarket (Waitrose), pubs and coffee shops, and a GP surgery with nearby chemist. There is also a dental surgery. The Town Hall hosts many events including sporting activities and amateur theatre productions. A new addition to the Town Hall complex is the Curve, which houses a small library and where they also run various community activities such as monthly cinema. There are plenty of green spaces and playgrounds, and a promenade along the sea front alongside which there is a play area for children and a paddling pool. It is kept busy as one of the three car ferries docks on the



island, linking with the port of Southampton. Cowes (just over the floating bridge) has streets of small shops and good places to eat. Famous for Cowes Week, when it is full of visiting sailors and yachts, it is also home to the Red Jet which is the passenger link to Southampton.

East Cowes is a growing settlement, with new housing estates and major employers such as GKN Aerospace, RNLI (repair and building of inshore lifeboats), thriving shipyards and Red Funnel. There are many new families moving to the town. St James' church is in an excellent position in the middle of East Cowes and has the benefit of its own church hall and some parking. Local Holy Cross Roman Catholic Primary School holds their School Carol and end of year Services in St James.

Whippingham is a rural parish, with a population of about 3000. The historic church of St Mildred's is set in delightful grounds overlooking the River Medina, the cemetery, orchard and gardens are lovingly cared for by our committed team of gardeners. Recently extended is our peace garden, ideal for quiet reflection. Our resident red squirrels are frequently seen in our tranquil grounds.

Hundreds of people pass through the church and community centre each week in the tourist season, and this is at present an untapped opportunity for spreading God's Word. Nearby within the parish is Queensgate Primary School, as well as the independent Priory School. They both enjoy good relationship with St Mildred's and uses the church for school services and events. Also, within the locality is CECAMM, part of the Isle of Wight College which offers engineering courses and apprenticeships, and the GKN factory site.



Wootton Bridge has developed into a community of about 4,000 and is one of the largest villages on the island. The village is located at the head of Wootton Creek. The road bridge has the creek on one side and the picturesque Lakeside on the other. Buses between Ryde and Newport pass through Wootton Bridge every 10 minutes. This gives easy access to two major towns on the Island.

Wootton Bridge has a variety of shops, pubs, and a small Tesco as well as Wootton Community Primary School, with which the parish has a close relationship. There is a recreation ground with rugby, cricket, and football clubs as well as Scouts and Brownies, and a large community centre next to the GP's surgery.

The popular Isle of Wight Steam Railway has a station in Wootton. The old, Victorian village school is used as a social centre where villagers can go to have refreshments and can socialise.

The Village memorial is in St Edmund's churchyard. Wreaths from the Parish Council and uniform organisations are laid at a service held on Remembrance Sunday.



# OUR TEAM



ST JAMES' PCC, L-R: JILL, ROSE, MARGARET, CELIA, JOY, SUE, ROBERT, GILL AND COLIN

## EAST COWES

- **Robert Hall**, Churchwarden, Electoral Roll Officer, Deanery Synod Rep. On Puzzle Week Committee
- **Colin Dutton**, Lay Pastoral Assistant. Deanery Synod Rep, Sides person
- **Jill Traill**, PCC Treasurer. Volunteer organist. On behalf of East Cowes Churches Together leads services in local independent living care home. On Puzzle Week Committee
- **Steve Beynon**, PSO
- **Sue Hutchinson**, PCC member, on Puzzle Week Committee
- **Celia Jones**, PCC member, Coordinator of Puzzle Week on Puzzle Week Committee
- **Gillian Hitchens**, PCC member, Sides person
- **Margaret Prior**, PCC member
- **Joy Heath**, PCC member
- **Rose Mitchell**, On Puzzle Week Committee. Choir member (RSCM)
- **Sue Lane**, Sides person
- **Wendy Farrow**, Sides person
- **Rita Osborne**, Sides person



- **Beryl Knight**, Friendship Guild leader
- **Michael Sharp**, Choir member (RSCM)
- **Lynn Shearman**, Volunteer organist
- **Michael Harris**, Overall leader of Puzzle Week on Puzzle Week Committee

We are also very well supported by a local PtO who will take services occasionally, plus many people who read the Lesson and do the Intercessions in services. We are also fortunate in having additional volunteers who help us run our Jigsaw Puzzle Festival each August.



**SUE, SARAH AND JEAN (PCC MEMBERS)**



**ANN, ROBIN (PCC MEMBERS)  
JULIA AND MARY (SIDES PERSONS)**



**BERYL (CHILDREN'S LEAD AND PCC MEMBER) AND CAREY (PCC SECRETARY)**



**THE GARDENING TEAM INCLUDING PETER, TONY, NICOLA, ANN, DAVID AND SARAH**

## **WHIPPINGHAM**

- **Sue Richmond**, PCC member, church treasurer and coffee shop manager.
- **Carey Morton**, PCC secretary, children's group leader, PCC representative, GDPR.

- **Sarah Kite**, Safeguarding and PSO, PCC representative, co-leader of 7<sup>th</sup> Wave fellowship
- **Beryl Harrison**, Teddy club leader, Sunday school leader, Rock solid leader, first aid, GDPR
- **Jean Kirby**, PCC member. Teddy club.
- **Ann Garner**, PCC member, electoral role officer, church cleaning and preparation.
- **Peter Harrison**, Health and Safety
- **Chris Broughton**, Coach/church visitor co-ordinator
- **Robert Wardle**, Co-ordinator for the church volunteers
- **Ruth Smith**, Leads ECO church
- **Sides People:** Mary, Robin, (PCC) Julia and Ann (PCC) are our dedicated sides people who ensure that our weekly services run smoothly and efficiently and that visitors are warmly welcomed.
- **Gardening team:** Tony, Sarah, David, Nicola, Peter and several others
- **Volunteers.** Many dedicated volunteers who work in the church and in the coffee shop making it possible for visitors to enjoy this unique and historic experience and locals to meet up with friends in our very popular coffee shop.

## **WOOTTON**

- **Hilary Baldwin**, Anna Chaplain, Lay Worship Leader, Lay Pastoral Assistant and PCC member; helps lead the services held at local care homes, choir member
- **Canon David Bennison**, Licensed Preacher, Lay Worship leader, Deanery Synod representative, PCC Treasurer leads non-Eucharistic worship, Morning Worship and Evensong; prepares audio-visual material for services and leads services at local care homes
- **Sue Beynon**, Lay Worship Leader children's work and PCC member; leads Christingle Service
- **Steve Beynon**, Churchwarden, Parish Safeguarding Officer and Lay Worship leader; leads informal Services including Sunday Brunch, choir member
- **Mike Broadsmith**, Deputy Churchwarden and server, buildings and churchyard maintenance.



ST EDMUND'S AND ST MARK'S PCC, L-R: STEVE, HELEN (PARISH ADMINISTRATOR), DAVID M (PCC SECRETARY), HARRY, MICHAEL, ERICA, DAVID B AND MARY.

- **Ann Capps**, leads Elephant Club
- **John Castle**, choir member
- **Helen Davison**, Parish Administrator and choir member
- **Erica Hall**, Lay Worship Leader, and PCC member; leads Evensong, Elephant Club and Discussion Group as well as being our Eco-champion
- **Warwick Hammerton**, oversees website and Facebook pages, prepares layout of *The Bridge* magazine.
- **Ed Hopper**, Deanery Synod representative
- **Helen Hopper**, Organiser of Luke 11 Prayer Line
- **Margaret King**, sacristan
- **Harry Kirby**, Churchwarden; leads Mark's Brothers' Breakfast Club, choir member
- **Pauline Kirby**, PCC member; responsible for housekeeping
- **David McCulloch**, former monk of Quarr Abbey, organist and Choir Director; also, PCC Secretary and Assistant Treasurer
- **Sarah McCutcheon**, choir member and cleaner
- **Mary Peters**, deputy churchwarden and sacristan
- **Richard Russell**, Chair of the Friends of St Edmund's
- **Helen Smallwood**, PCC member and choir member

In addition, we are ably supported by several PtOs, many of whom live in the parish.

# THE HOUSE



The Rectory in Wootton Bridge is a good-sized property in a convenient location, situated halfway between St Edmund's and St Mark's Churches. It was built on the grounds of the former rectory in 1968. The ground floor comprises a study, lounge, dining room, kitchen, utility room and toilet. Upstairs are four bedrooms, a separate shower, toilet and bathroom. There is a garage and a large garden with a patio area. It has recently had some renovation and improvement works.



# ROLE DESCRIPTION: INCUMBENT OF THE EAST MEDINA PLURALITY

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## OVERVIEW

We are seeking a priest to serve as Incumbent of the East Medina Missional Plurality, serving the parishes of St James', East Cowes; St Mildred's, Whippingham; and St Edmund's and St Mark's, Wootton Bridge. This role sits within the Diocese of Portsmouth's vision to be a Jesus-centred, Kingdom-seeking church.

As a newly formed plurality, this is a key appointment. The postholder will lead the churches in developing a shared identity, deepening discipleship, and growing in confident, outward-facing mission.

This role is a Lord Chancellor patronage appointment.

## PURPOSE OF THE ROLE

The Incumbent will:

- lead the plurality in discerning God's direction and responding in faith;
- shape a culture of prayer, discipleship, and spiritual growth;
- enable the churches to grow in number, depth, and impact;
- develop a missional focus, particularly among children, young people, and families.

## KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

### 1. *Spiritual Leadership and Discipleship*

- » Lead the plurality in becoming more deeply rooted in prayer and scripture
- » Encourage intentional discipleship and spiritual formation

- » Support and develop lay leadership

## 2. Leading Mission and Growth

- » Embed a culture of invitation and outreach
- » Develop opportunities for growth
- » Focus on children, young people, and families

## 3. Collaborative Leadership

- » Build unity across the parishes
- » Develop shared vision and priorities
- » Lead change with sensitivity

## 4. Pastoral Presence

- » Be visible and approachable
- » Offer pastoral care across all ages

## 5. Developing Others

- » Recognise and nurture gifts
- » Build a collaborative ministry culture

## **CONTEXT AND PRIORITIES**

The plurality is at an early stage of its life together. The next incumbent will help shape identity, build trust, and develop shared mission.

## **PERSON SPECIFICATION**

We are looking to recruit a new Rector with the following qualities:

- Someone who seeks God's way in life, through their growing knowledge of Christ and of His
- work in us, through the Holy Spirit. This person will, necessarily, be prayerful; seeking to speak to God and to hear his guidance.
- Someone who is essentially kind; willing to listen to others as they try to express their hopes, needs or anxieties; being respectful of the character and traditions of each parish.



- A willingness to care for the Churches as they now stand, feeding and nurturing our existing congregations while also seeking to expand out from those Churches through new initiatives and projects.
- Will be seen and well known in all the Churches of the Benefice but will also be as outgoing as is possible/feasible in our local communities, especially school and care homes.
- A tactful leader and guide who acknowledges their own limitations but is open to and nurturing towards the gifts of others, both in the congregations and in the wider communities; building and developing further the lay leadership capacity and utilising the skills of the wider congregations
- Is not hasty in seeking to change current provisions and practices in the Churches but takes time to discern and apply changes as needed, particularly in the important areas of mission and outreach.
- One who approaches the need for good administration and organisation with a willingness to delegate to those with appropriate skills.

## **WHAT WE OFFER**

- supportive leadership teams
- openness to change
- strong community links
- opportunity to shape the future

## **SUMMARY**

We are seeking a priest who will lead us in faith, help us grow in mission, and enable us to become a more united and outward-looking church.

# APPENDIX 1: REGULAR SERVICE SCHEDULE



## ST JAMES, EAST COWES

- Sunday:  
Holy Communion currently every week

## ST MILDRED'S, WHIPPINGHAM

- Sunday:  
Holy Communion every week during the month.  
All-Age Worship one Sunday each month.

## ST EDMUND'S (E) AND ST MARK'S (M), WOOTTON

- Sunday:  
All-Age Brunch (1st week of the month) M  
BCP Communion (1st week of the month) E  
Holy Communion (2nd + 4th week of the month) M  
Morning Worship (3rd week of the month) M  
Evensong (2nd + 4th week of the month) E
- Wednesday:  
Café Communion (1st Wednesday of the month) M  
BCP Communion (2nd, 3rd + 4th Wednesday of the month) E

## PLURALITY SERVICE

- Every fifth Sunday, rotating around the parishes



## APPENDIX 2: LIST OF MISSION AND OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

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### ST JAMES', EAST COWES

- Teddy Club Toddler Group\*
- Friendship Guild
- 7th Wave Fellowship\*
- Coffee Mornings
- Charitable giving

### ST MILDRED'S, WHIPPINGHAM

- Teddy Club Toddler Group\*
- Rock Solid Ecumenical Youth Club
- Sunday School
- 7th Wave Fellowship\*
- Charitable Giving for 2025 £1299 (British Legion Appeal, East Cowes Food Pantry, New port Salvation Army)

### ST EDMUND AND ST MARK, WOOTTON

- Elephant Club Dementia Group
- Marks' Brothers Men's Group
- *The Bridge* magazine, 10 editions per year delivered free to every house in Wootton
- Primary School Assemblies (Monthly)
- Community Partnership (Skateboard Park)
- Solent Grange Care Home (Monthly)
- Charitable Giving – £3135 in 24/25 (e.g. school hardship fund, local charities, food bank and Bishop's Lent Appeal)

(\* = joint venture between churches)

# APPENDIX 3: CURRENT PERSONNEL AND RESOURCES

## ST JAMES' EAST COWES

Stipendiary clergy	0	
Non-stipendiary clergy	0	
Readers/LLMs	0	
Lay Pastoral Assistant	1	
Churchwardens	2	
Other PCC Members	7	
Total Parish Electoral Roll	37	
Usual service attendance (over-18s)	25	Holy Communion
Usual service attendance (under-18s)	0	Holy Communion
Usual participation in mission and outreach activities (over-18s)	20*	Teddy Club
	15	Friendship Guild
	8*	7th Wave
Usual participation in mission and outreach activities (under-18s)	27*	Teddy Club
	0	Friendship Guild
	0	7th Wave
Income (2025)	£34600	
Expenditure (2025)	£43700	



Current Parish Share (2026)	£20854	
% forecast to be paid for current year	100%	
Free Capital Reserves	£89000	
Restricted Capital Reserves	£7700	
Number and type of buildings owned by the parish	1	Church Building
	1	Church Hall

### ST MILDRED'S, WHIPPINGHAM

Stipendiary clergy	0	
Non-stipendiary clergy	0	
Readers/LLMs	0	
Other Lay Worship Leaders	0	
Churchwardens	2	Acting
Other PCC Members	8	
Total Parish Electoral Roll	50	
Usual service attendance (over-18s)	32	Holy Communion
	29	All-Age Worship
	25	Morning Worship
Usual service attendance (under-18s)	0	Holy Communion
	9	All-Age Worship
Usual participation in mission and outreach activities (over-18s)	20*	Teddy Club
	4	Rock Solid
	2	Sunday School
	8*	7th Wave

Usual participation in mission and outreach activities (under-18s)	27*	Teddy Club
	20	Rock Solid
	2	Sunday School
	0	7th Wave
Income – 2025	£ 59,800	
Expenditure (2025)	£55,300	
Current Parish Share	£14,637	
% Forecast to be paid for current year	100%	
Free Capital Reserves	£56,000	
Restricted Capital Reserves	-	
Number and type of buildings owned by the parish	1	Church Building
	1	Church Hall

#### ST EDMUND AND ST MARK, WOOTTON

Stipendiary clergy	0
Non-stipendiary clergy	0
Readers/LLMs	0
Other Lay Worship Leaders	5
Churchwardens	2
Other PCC Members	8
Total Parish Electoral Roll	39



Usual service attendance (over-18s)	25	Holy Communion
	25	Café Communion
	20	All-Age Brunch
	20	Morning Worship
	13	BCP Communion (Wed)
		BCP Communion (Sun)
	10	Evensong
	7	
Usual service attendance (under-18s)	4	Holy Communion
	0	Café Communion
	8	All-Age Brunch
	1	Morning Worship
	0	BCP Communion (Wed)
		BCP Communion (Sun)
	0	Evensong
	0	
Usual participation in mission and outreach activities (over-18s)	12	Elephant Club
	8	Marks Brothers
	80+	Christingle
Usual participation in mission and outreach activities (under-18s)	0	Elephant Club
	0	Marks Brothers
	40+	Christingle

Income 2024	£58,998
Income 2025 (provisional)	£54,924
Expenditure 2024	£61,399
Expenditure 2025 (provisional)	£60,591
Current Parish Share	£26,100
% forecast to be paid for current year	100%
Free Capital Reserves	£0
Restricted Capital Reserves	£2,000
Number and type of buildings owned by the parish	2 Church Buildings 1 Church Hall



# DIOCESE VISION AND STRATEGY

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Our vision in our diocese is to be a Church with Jesus Christ at the heart of everything we do, a Church in which we seek God's Kingdom, and where all are enabled to experience a life-transforming encounter with Jesus Christ in order to become disciples.

We have now crystallised that thinking into a phrase that we hope sums up what we aspire to be: a rejuvenating community (one that rejuvenates itself and seeks to rejuvenate others) of Jesus-centred (learners and followers of Jesus, with our actions shaped by him), Kingdom-seeking (including our devotion to God, our passion for social justice, our care for creation and fellowship with each other) disciples (we are committed to our faith, and want to keep on becoming more like Jesus).

That vision is supplemented by two further priorities:

- We deliberately prioritise our work with children, young people and young adults, to enable a new generation to grow in faith and find their voice. They are the Church of today.
- We value and treasure our older people, and ensure they are being cared for holistically, by the provision of Anna Chaplaincy to support them in every parish, benefice and cluster across the diocese.

As a diocesan community, we are invited to take part in the strategy that we pray will guide us towards the vision described above, as we are led by the Holy Spirit. This strategy aims to tackle some of the challenges we know that we face as a diocese: declining attendances, older congregations, expensive buildings, over-stretched staff, and a gap between the costs of our ministry and our income.

So our REJUVENATING strategy aims to place children and young people at the heart of our planning, and also seeks to REVIVE, REVITALISE and RENEW our network of parishes, chaplaincies and church schools. Creating thriving churches with an emphasis on children and young people is a watermark that runs through these parts of our strategy:

- **REVIVE:** a call to spiritual renewal for all our clergy and lay leadership to experience a continued personal refreshing of the wonder of God's presence in our lives.
- **REVITALISE:** to grow our existing churches, connecting ministries together to form a pathway that reaches people who are unconnected with church, and supports them as they journey to become committed disciples who own for themselves Jesus' mission.
- **RENEW:** in communities where there is no effective church presence, we believe it is right to plant/transplant new congregations and build New Worshipping Communities to focus on outreach and younger generations.

Our STRATEGY is summarised in this diagram:





# INTRODUCTION TO THE DIOCESE OF PORTSMOUTH

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The Diocese of Portsmouth stretches across south-east Hampshire and includes the whole of the Isle of Wight. It includes 133 parishes, from Botley in the west to Emsworth in the east, and from Blackmoor in the north to Ventnor on the 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 44 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 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/our-strategy](https://portsmouth.anglican.org/our-strategy).



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.

*a Rejuvenating community of Jesus-centred, Kingdom-seeking disciples*



Diocese  
of Portsmouth

*Jesus-centred, Kingdom-seeking*

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