



RINGWOOD
BENEFICE

Discover life, make a difference



The Benefice of Ringwood
with Ellingham & Harbridge
and St Leonards & St Ives



DIOCESE of
WINCHESTER

WELCOME to our profile!

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From the diocese:

Thank you for your interest in coming to work in the diocese of Winchester where we are committed to serving people and communities across Hampshire and East Dorset.

Our vision is to 'Live the Mission of Jesus' and in doing so we want to make a difference and see lives transformed through the love of God. We serve a range of diverse communities, from rural to urban, with our Cathedral being sited in the historic city of Winchester. From coastal Bournemouth to Andover, Southampton to the villages around Basingstoke, ministry takes place through our churches, chaplaincies and schools and we are delighted to encourage lay ministry in all its varied forms.

We are committed to being a truly representative diocese and we recognise our need to develop in diversity. The Diocese of Winchester is an exciting place to be and we look forward to receiving your application.



*The Rt Revd Philip Mounstephen,
The Bishop of Winchester*

INTRODUCTION

An introduction to the Benefice.

About the role...

Welcome to Ringwood Benefice on the edge of the beautiful New Forest! We are seeking to appoint **an Associate Priest on House for Duty terms** to serve the two parishes of the Benefice of Ringwood with Ellingham & Harbridge and St Leonards & St Ives, all in Christchurch Deanery. The post will be Benefice wide with the exact duties and responsibilities to be agreed between the Associate Priest and our newly appointed Vicar Rev'd Stephen Miles.

The Parish of Ringwood with Ellingham and Harbridge consists of five churches:

St Peter and St Paul, Ringwood

St John the Baptist, Poulner

St Paul's, Bisterne

St Mary and All Saints, Ellingham

All Saints, Harbridge.

The Parish of St Leonards & St Ives is a single church - All Saints.

Our 10 year strategic plan highlights the opportunities which exist with the Benefice. We are looking for a Minister with proven leadership capability who, in collaboration with the PCCs, Ministry Team and the congregations, will bring a faith-filled energy to encourage, build and develop our existing communities and help us to grow new disciples.

Ringwood is a fully inclusive Benefice, and all applicants are welcomed.



...and about us

Where are we?

The Benefice is geographically centred on the picturesque historic market town of Ringwood on the banks of the river Avon, right on the Hampshire/Dorset border.

What sort of people live here?

The total population of the Benefice is approximately 21,000 and continues to grow. Households are both rural and urban, ranging from those facing financial hardship to the financially secure, with the average income being lower than other parts of Hampshire, owing to the older age profile.

What about Ringwood as a Town to live in?

Ringwood is the New Forest's main market town, with the Market Charter dating back to 1226. This very pretty town sits on the western edge of the Forest at a crossing point of the River Avon. It boasts four supermarkets, many independent shops, and easy access to large multiples of all sorts within 15 mins. Ringwood has its market once a week on Wednesdays along with monthly farmers' markets and occasional European markets.

Getting around

Ringwood has good **road** connections in all directions. The nearest **main railway stations** at Southampton or Bournemouth are 20 mins away, with a fast line to London. The good **bus** network in Ringwood itself connects with Bournemouth and Salisbury. National Express coaches take you to London as well as to Heathrow and Gatwick airports. Bournemouth and Southampton airports provide regular services to many European destinations. Cycling is easy around Ringwood. Many roads take you west into Dorset.

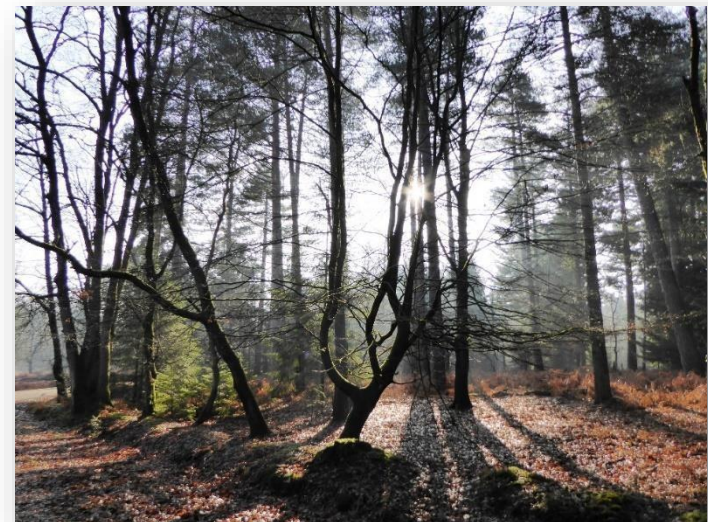
Schools

Early Years: there are several preschool groups in Ringwood including at Greyfriars.

Primary: The area is very well served by several state schools including an infants' school and a junior school at Poulner; a Church of England infants' school and a junior school in Ringwood itself. St Leonards and St Ives has a primary and nursery school.

Secondary: A co-educational secondary school, Ringwood School which is a National Teaching Academy with approximately 1500 students, is within a few minutes' walk of the vicarage.

Independent: There are also several independent schools including a large private nursery immediately adjacent to Ellingham Church. Ringwood has three additional needs establishments.



Exploring

The glory of this area is its proximity to the 220 square-mile New Forest National Park and to the Hampshire and Dorset coasts. The New Forest is a unique environment in Europe, including one of the largest remaining tracts of unenclosed pastureland, heathland and forest in southeast England. There are miles of open country to be explored on foot, on horseback or by bike on designated cycle routes including Castleman Trailway to Poole. There are many excellent pubs to be discovered. It is a walker's paradise with not only the Forest and country parks, but also the Avon Valley Footpath.

Close by are further open spaces of Moors Valley Country Park, a vast open space with a Play Trail, narrow-gauge steam railway, Go Ape tree-top adventure, golf course, country shop, restaurant and more, and Avon Heath Country Park, a Green Flag-awarded park dominated by acres of lowland and wetland heath, grassland and heather, with pine and birch woodlands.

Activities

Our area is blessed with great leisure activities including outstanding cycling and horse riding, swimming, boating in the sea only ten miles away, fishing, cinemas and theatres in Bournemouth and Salisbury and many very fine affordable eating places.



There is a **swimming pool** and **leisure centre** in Ringwood as well as a David Lloyd Club. There is a good **public library** which has a local studies centre, and a range of evening classes and **leisure activities** are on offer at the Greyfriars Centre in town. Bournemouth and Southampton are important **cultural centres** including a **world-class orchestra** and an **international centre for dance**, as well as **art galleries and museums**.

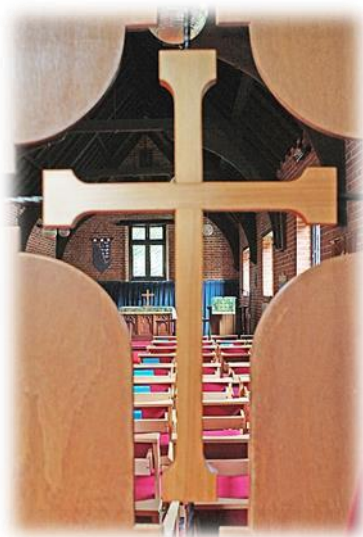
The Ringwood community has a great spirit and loves to come together at **key events** such as Ringwood Carnival in September each year, the biennial Pedal Car Grand Prix, Bonfire Night and Fireworks, and meeting Father Christmas on Christmas Eve. The whole town gathers in the Market Place to sing carols and drink mulled wine, and to give gifts to Father Christmas which are then distributed to children in need. The town has several groups concerned with the environmental crisis including RACE (Ringwood Actions for Climate Emergency), Greening Ringwood and a community fridge. It really is a wonderful place to live.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Our vision for the future is to be energised by faith to bring more people to know God's love and to deepen and strengthen the discipleship of those who are already part of our church family. We also want to continue to value and nurture the good things we already have and do. We long to be better at reaching out to our communities and to become more integrated in them. We also wish to enhance our support for the deanery, diocese, national church and our brothers and sisters in other countries, including building on our existing links with Kinkiizi, Uganda and Jaffa, Israel. We are eager to increase our activity to protect the environment and God's wonderful creation.

Our Aspirations:

- Always seek out what God wants, make space to hear His voice and be ready to answer His call recognising the importance of prayer in everything
- Be energised by our faith, be the face of Christ to all we meet and always love one another
- Show real care and commitment to providing a constant depth of pastoral and spiritual care in all in our communities
- Really value our young people, nurture their faith and inspire them to play a full part in the life of our Benefice
- Be innovative and enthusiastic for new approaches, respond creatively to challenges whilst still nurturing the best of our traditions
- Treasure our ministry team, support and encourage them to work together with us, in love and compassion. Nurture our relationships with one another that together we may grow in faith
- Be excited about the opportunities of meeting people through Occasional Offices, showing them the joy of faith and of God's love for them



OUR CHURCH LIFE

Young People and Families Ministry

The young are important to our churches, and they bring with them family members and carers. We help them to think about faith and to support those already on the journey. We have four groups through which we offer Ministry, and the team look forward to serving alongside the new incumbent.

Our mission starts in two churches with **Toddler Groups** aged 0-4, where families feel cared for and nurtured, developing friendships with each other and with those who lead the groups.

Then we run **Messy Churches**, which are relaxed and informal, and welcome families of all ages to engage in a selection of crafts, a short worship time and a shared meal, based on a biblical theme. For many, Messy Church is their only form of worship.

The **IMPACT Youth Group** normally meets every week and enables young people aged 12 – 18 across the Benefice to explore their faith in a relaxed and exciting way. However after our students from nearby Moorlands Theological College finished their placement it is sadly not able to meet at the moment. We are committed to resuming IYG activities as soon as we possibly can. An application has been made to Moorlands for another student to be placed with us in September 2024.

Finally, **Meet & Eat** is held once a fortnight, hosted by a team from the church, supporting families identified by Ringwood CofE Infant School, through a variety of accessible play activities and sharing a meal together. The families have made positive relationships with the Meet & Eat team and enjoy their warm welcome.

Pastoral

Pastoral support is the essence of the Church of England “being always there for you”, providing the Pastoral Rites including Baptism, Marriage, Funeral Rites, Holy Communion for the housebound, Reconciliation and Ministry to the seriously ill and dying.

Families turn to us at these important or even critical moments in their lives and bring others with them, so it is vital we offer support and have extra people who operate across the Benefice alongside the ministry team. It is at these Rites that we find people who often never go to church, but who have silent belief, and welcome help in re-engaging with the Church, as they can find it intimidating and unfamiliar.



Discipleship & Spiritual Development

Although we are made up of six individual churches, we are all united in our commitment to Discipleship and to enabling people across our communities to grow in faith. In the past we have run Alpha, Emmaus and Start courses in our churches, but would welcome new ideas and innovative leadership in this area. We have several home groups, prayer groups and bible study groups as well as Impact, which is aimed at supporting the teenage members of our congregations. There are also many more informal opportunities for fellowship and discussion, such as Vintage Messy and soup lunches. However, we are looking for an Associate Priest who together with our newly appointed Vicar can bring in a new vision and enthusiasm to build on these foundations. We passionately want to help people develop spiritually and grow closer to God - are you the person who can help us?



Church and Community

We strongly believe that our churches must be an active and lively part of our communities. Our churches are sacred, special and much-loved, and they are important tools which we can use to help others to come to know God's love – the church in the community, and the community in the churches. We make it easier for people to cross the threshold by holding regular events such as coffee mornings, concerts and lunches, and we involve the church in a wide variety of whole-town events such as Ringwood Carnival, Christmas Eve in the Market Place and the Ellingham Show. With major projects and repairs we engage with the community, letting them know what is happening via leaflets, newspaper articles and social media posts. With the recent replacement of the South Transept window at St Peter & St Paul, we offered sponsorship of panes of glass and the townspeople responded enthusiastically. All of these activities strengthen bonds and grow relationships between congregation members as we work together to live out our mission.



Living in Love & Faith

The Benefice is still in the earliest stages of engagement with the discussions around and implications of Living in Love and Faith. Ringwood PCC has had a discussion with the Archdeacon to learn about the process of LLF and the recent developments at that time. Neither PCC has done an LLF course or come to an agreed position. We look forward to engaging with and pursuing this very important matter with our new Vicar in the Autumn of 2024.

Our Churches

Our six churches are very different and we love that! We embrace the wide variety of styles of worship we can offer and aim to have something for everyone, wherever they are on their Christian journey, and especially if they haven't yet begun. Our services range from Book of Common Prayer, through Common Worship to less formal and fully informal. We conduct large numbers of occasional offices and value these connections with the people in our communities. We have four retired clergy with PTO and six licensed lay ministers. Five lay people now hold Bishop's Commission for Mission.

Each church has a dedicated local church committee organising everything day-to-day. We are very active in fund-raising and social events. We aim to be fully embedded in our communities and to use our church resources, principally our buildings, to benefit others.

We have recently hosted among others:

- an addiction support group
- a bereavement group
- support for those struggling with mental health issues
- a safe place for meals and play for vulnerable families
- facilities for Ukrainian guests

Our churches play lead roles in civic events, especially Remembrance Sunday, Armed Forces Day, Royal occasions, Christmas, and Easter.

St Peter & St Paul

The Ringwood Parish Church is at the heart of the town in many ways – geographically, emotionally, and spiritually. Townspeople see it as their church, and we conduct many baptisms, weddings & funerals, and civic events. The congregations enjoy a broad range of worship styles. We are very active in repairing and refurbishing our beautiful church.

St Mary & All Saints

Ellingham is a Norman church whose congregation enjoy mainly traditional Prayer Book services, enhanced by our enthusiastic choir. However, we also hold monthly modern family services. We have strong links with the nursery school next door, local scouts and with Moyles Court, a local boarding school.



St John's

The worshipping community at St John's says, "We love St. John's, we want to worship there. It is not too big or too small. It is a real family: caring, family friendly, peaceful, informal, honest, open, welcoming, and kind.

Spiritual gifts are allowed to thrive. It has 'unstuffiness'. The LLMs are delightful and gifted."

We have a busy weekly Toddler group, monthly Messy Church and monthly café-style Family Service. The Benefice also holds a contemporary, evening worship service 'The Well' in the church twice monthly.

St. John's has a spacious church hall with well equipped kitchen and a smaller room with a kitchenette. Both are used by the church, local community groups and a business.

St Paul's

Nestling in trees, and set amongst fields, St. Paul's is a natural centre of rural worship. The surrounding mixed-farming estate hosts the Barn Dance, a Harvest Festival, Ride and Stride, the nationally famous Scarecrow Competition, and Open Farm Sunday with up to 4,000 visitors. The strong conservation ethos of the estate means the church is favoured by lovers of the countryside and all its biblical symbolism.



All Saints Harbridge

Our church has 15th century origins and was rebuilt in 1838. Harbridge is a small rural hamlet of about 25 houses with the church as the focal point. Alongside services it is a community space for meetings and concerts. We hold a Carol service every Christmas with Hyde Brass Band and traditional services on Easter Sunday and Christmas Day.



All Saints St Leonards & St Ives

All Saints Parish Church is a modern style building. Here you will find a warm, supportive church family. Our services range from a BCP service, Holy Communion, Service of the Word and an Informal service. We run a toddler group, Messy Church and periodically Vintage Messy. A well-equipped modern Church Hall is adjacent which has recently provided a venue for a 'Warm Spaces' time every Tuesday during the winter.



Churches Together in Ringwood & District (CTiRD)

Many denominations of Christians worship in Ringwood and the surrounding areas and our Churches Together group brings them together under the banner 'One Faith, many flavours.'

CTiRD is very proactive in bringing the Gospel to the people of Ringwood and helping them to come to know God's love. The committee meets monthly and the Parish of Ringwood is represented. CTiRD put on many events through the year to help Ringwood people to gather including prayer walks, celebrations for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, King Charles' Coronation and at Easter and Christmas.

For the Coronation, CTiRD held a service on the village green with choirs from Ringwood schools taking part. They provided free to use entertainment, crafts and bouncy castles for children.

Every Good Friday Churches Together organises a very visible Walk of Witness through the town.

Each year they are an active presence at the town's Christmas Lights Switch on, presenting the nativity and a well-supported choir.

During the winter months they provided warm spaces for people to gather for a hot drink and a chat. CTiRD works together with EM Power Community to help people and last year it set up a Hardship fund which has been very appreciated.

You can expect to find community and support from an energised group of Christians compelled by their faith to works of outreach and generosity.

OUR TEAM

Our new Vicar has been appointed and we are very excited to welcome him in September 2024. We are immensely blessed with a wonderful and gifted team of **four retired priests** and **six licensed lay ministers** who give generously of their time and talents to support churches across the Benefice, and are ably supported by our Churchwardens in both parishes. In the past we have received Curates in training and we enjoy a close relationship with Moorlands College located on the edge of the Benefice, to which we offer placement opportunities for students. Our friendly and supportive team are eagerly waiting to welcome our new Associate Priest into this closeknit community.



Associate Priest



Vicar
Rev Stephen Miles



Rev Canon Michael Anderson
Rev Terry Roberts
Rev Canon Richard Emblin
Rev Canon Peter Vargeson



Richard Powell LLM
Steve Wood LLM
Ruth Freeman LLM



not pictured
Elizabeth Halford LLM
Peter Jackson LLM
Derick Potter LLM



Lynne Wilson CW SLSI
Frankie Hester CW SLSI
Matthew Steele CW Ringwood
Jacqueline Brown CW Ringwood

There are also **five lay people with Bishop's Commission for Mission** of varying strands, including Worship Leader, Pastoral, Prayer and Creation Care

Benefice Map



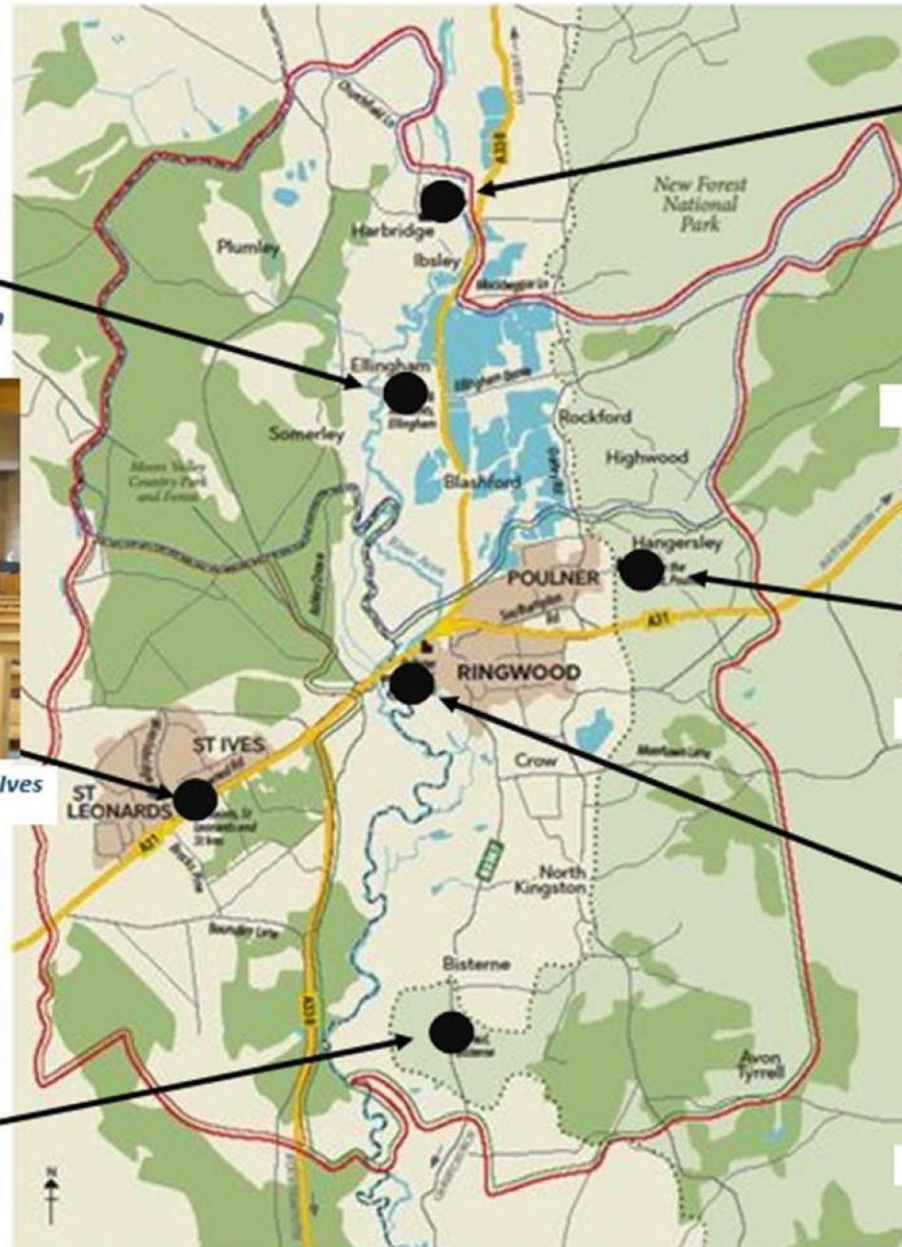
St Mary & All Saints Ellingham



All Saints St Leonards & St Ives



St Paul's Bisterne



All Saints Harbridge



St John's Poulner



St Peter & St Paul Ringwood

FINANCE

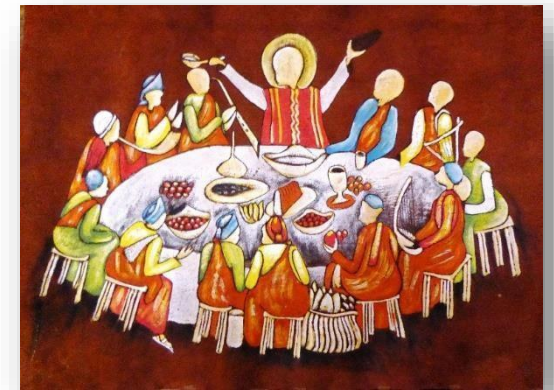
Financial challenges are part of life for most parishes and some dioceses, and we're no exception. But we do have excellent Finance Teams of highly experienced lay people assisted by some professional help all working very hard to honour God's provision and steward it well. The two Parishes operate their finances separately under the control of their respective PCCs. Both Annual Reports and Accounts can be viewed on the Benefice website. <https://www.ringwoodbenefice.org.uk/about-us/our-mission/>

Ringwood PCC paid CMF in full in 2024 and will do so again in 2025. In the four years prior to 2024 we were regrettably unable to pay the full request but have worked tremendously hard to change this and are confident we will continue to do so. St Leonards & St Ives pay their CMF requests in full.

Both parishes have reserves, but many of these are restricted as to their use. Each church takes responsibility for their own finances with detailed quarterly reports to the church committees and each works hard at individual fund-raising. We are committed to the Parish Giving Scheme.

The Parish of Ringwood employs a book-keeper to prepare the accounts and pay the monthly salaries of our three employees. St Leonards & St Ives employs a part-time Parish Administrator who assists with the accounts. Across the Benefice, all costs and expenses are split between the two Parishes and six churches according to their worshipping community numbers.

We look forward to embedding the joy of giving in response to God's love for us across our Benefice.



THE BENEFICE OFFICE

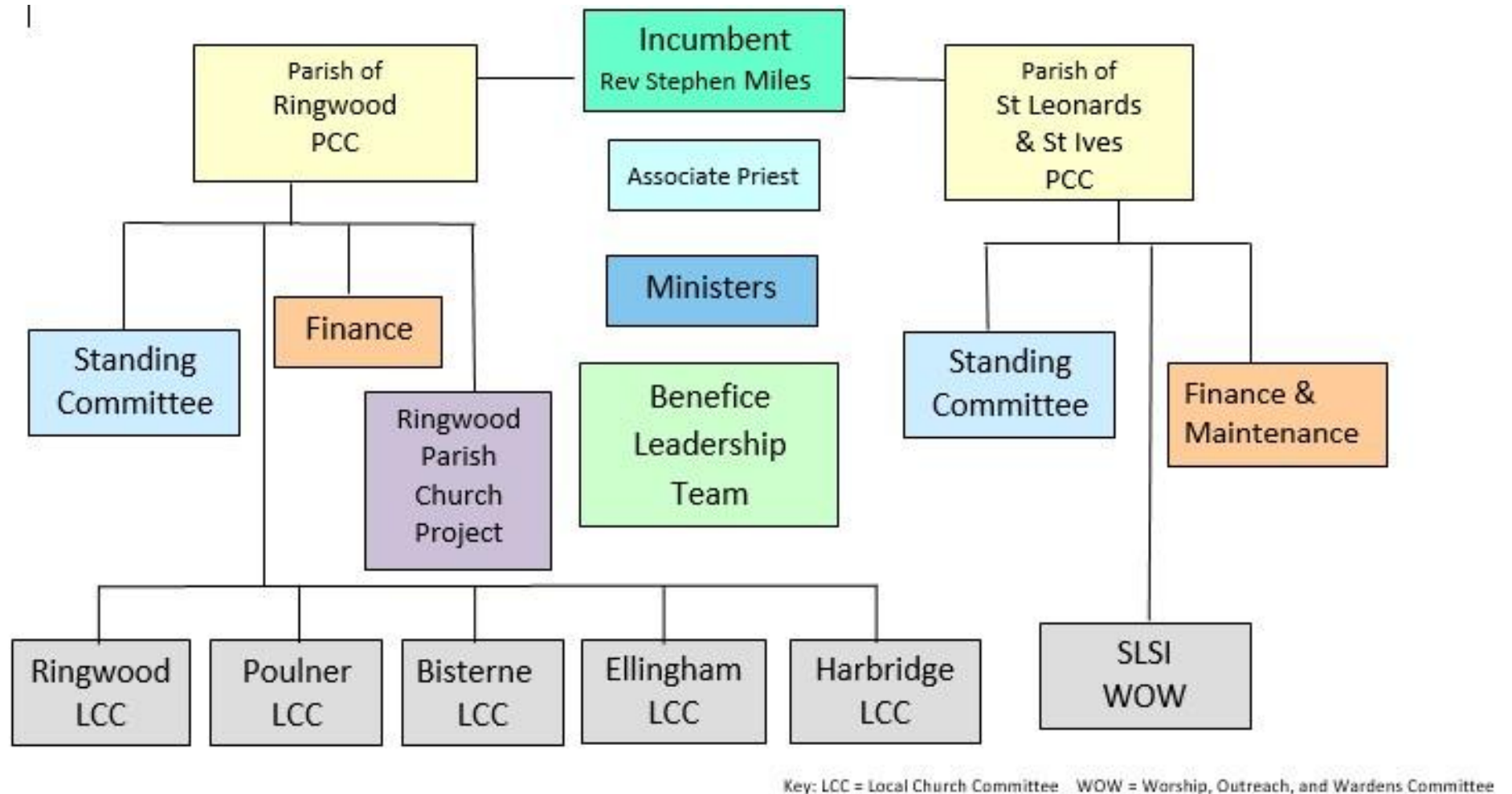


In 2018, the small church hall at St Peter & St Paul was converted into a suite of offices. The facilities include a kitchen, waiting room and w.c. Behind a security door are three offices or meeting rooms, a storage cupboard, space for the printers and an open area for small and informal meetings. The Parish of Ringwood's Office & Communications Manager works from the Benefice Office.

Expenses are shared between the two parishes.

There is a further office at St Leonards & St Ives, and the Administrator of that Parish works from there.

GOVERNANCE



Ringwood Benefice subscribes to the safeguarding policies and guidelines of the Church of England and is committed to safeguarding as an integral part of the life and ministry of the Church.
<https://www.ringwoodbenefice.org.uk/safeguarding/>

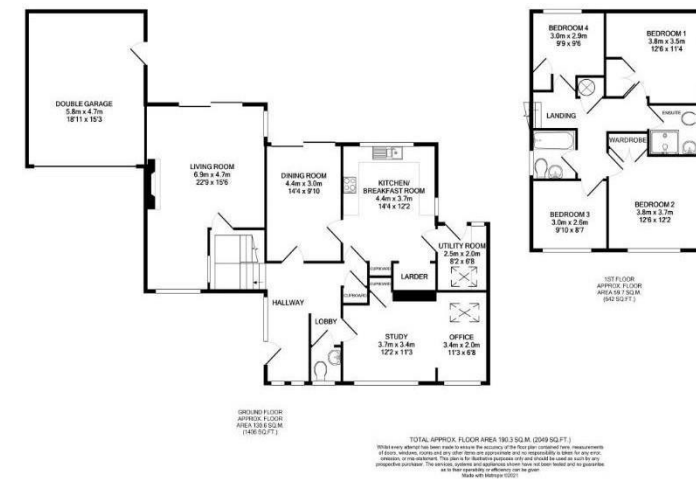
Associate Priest's (HfD) House:

The Vicarage in St Ives is in a quiet road not far from All Saints Church. A modern spacious and attractive split-level house with 4 beds, 2 receptions, kitchen, utility, bathroom, shower room, cloakroom, large study and double garage. Gardens to the front and rear are mainly lawn.

St Leonards & St Ives is a mostly residential area with beautiful accessible countryside nearby including Avon Heath Country Park (a site of special scientific interest), Ringwood Forest and Moors Valley Country Park which attracts many visitors.

The popular St Ives Primary and Nursery School has an Outstanding Ofsted rating. Secondary school students travel to Ringwood, Ferndown or beyond.

Local shops include a chemist, small grocery store and a fuel station with an M&S local.



This property's current energy rating is C.

<https://find-energy-certificate.service.gov.uk/energy-certificate/0085-3911-5202-3659-9200>

ROLE DESCRIPTION

This Role Description should be read in conjunction with the vision, aims and priorities set out in this profile.

ASSOCIATE PRIEST (HOUSE FOR DUTY)

We are looking for a priest who

- Has a strong personal faith with a daily routine of prayer and reflection
- Can work collaboratively within a large team of lay and ordained people and employees
- Has good time management skills and can be effective in their role whilst maintaining boundaries and protecting their free time
- Is flexible and willing to work with the new Vicar to determine their exact role and responsibilities
- Can adapt to a diverse range of worship styles and be an effective ministerial presence across the six churches and many service styles of the Benefice
- Has a heart for Youth, Children's and Families ministry and discipleship courses
- Preaches and communicates in an accessible yet inspiring way, helping to grow the faith of church congregations
- Has an active and lively commitment to developing discipleship and faith in all ages and groups
- Will actively help and support the Vicar in his / her ministry and be an active member of the senior leadership team of the Benefice
- Will assist in the pastoral care of the Benefice
- Has experience and passion to engage actively and innovatively in ministry outside the 'four walls' of our churches
- Has experience in Collective Worship
- Has experience working with children and young families helping to develop their faith.

The role description should always be read in conjunction with the [Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy](#).

HOW TO APPLY

A full application pack, along with Terms & Conditions, is available from the Diocesan website, [here](#).

For an informal conversation about vacancies in the Winchester Archdeaconry please contact:

Archdeacon of Bournemouth : The Ven Jean Burgess www.winchester.anglican.org

Jane Hammond Clergy Appointments Assistant 01962 737310 clergy.appointments@winchester.anglican.org

CHRISTCHURCH DEANERY

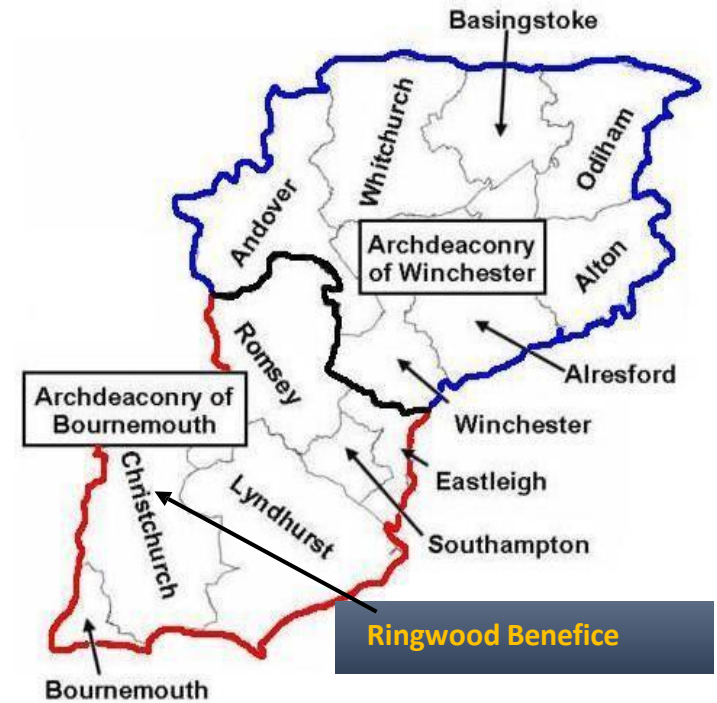
We are a very mixed deanery with 7 benefices and 26 churches. These range from suburban, through small town and large village to tiny hamlets. There is a variety of theology, spirituality and ways of being Church and we value and respect this.

The Synod is active and focused on supporting the mission of the Parishes. And the Chapter is friendly and supportive. A Deanery Mission Action Plan is in place, and we will shortly review and enhance it. We encourage all of our clergy to play an active role in the life of the Deanery.

We know that Christchurch Deanery is a great place to live and minister as together we seek to join with our Bishop in 'Living the Mission of Jesus'.

Area Dean and
Assistant Area Dean
vacant

Susan Lyonette
Lay Chair



Appendix 1

Present pattern of services April 2024 (average attendance 2023)

	St Peter & St Paul Ringwood	All Saints St Leonards & St Ives	St John the Baptist Poulner	St Paul Bisterne	St Mary & All Saints Ellingham	All Saints Harbridge
1 st Sunday	08:00 BCP HC (15) 09:30 The Gathering (14) 11:00 HC (40)	10:00 HC (30)	10:30 SOTW (25)	18:00 Evensong with HC (10)	11:15 HC (25)	
2 nd Sunday	11:00 HC (40) 09:30 The Gathering (14)	08:00 BCP HC (15) 10:00 SOTW (26)	10:30 'Soft Start' service in Church Hall (25) 18:30 The Well (28)		11:15 Matins (12) or family service with local school (30)	
3 rd Sunday	11:00 Morning Prayer with Baptism (65)	10:00 HC (30) 18:00 Reflections@6 (6)	08:00 BCP HC (15) 10:30 HC (25)	10:30 BCP Matins (10)	11:15 Matins (12)	
4 th Sunday	08:00 BCP HC (15) 09:30 The Gathering (14) 11:00 HC (40)	10:00 SOTW (26)	10:30 SOTW (25) 18:30 The Well (28)		11:15 Matins (12) or family service with local school (30)	10:00 Matins (Quarterly HC) (8)
5 th Sunday	08:00 BCP HC at St John's (15) and 10:30 Benefice Service at one of our churches (70)					
Wednesday	10:30 HC (12)					
Thursday		10:00 HC (18)				
Messy Church		2 nd Wednesdays 3.30pm	3 rd or 4 th Sundays 3pm		Electoral Roll 2024 Parish of Ringwood 212 Parish of St Leonards & St Ives 68	
IMPACT Benefice Youth Group	Wednesday 19:15 (term time only)					
Toddler Groups (term time only)		Wednesday 09:30 Toddler Group	Monday 09:15 Diddy Dunkers			
Meet & Eat	Alternate Thursdays (term time only)					

Occasional Offices

	St Peter & St Paul Ringwood	All Saints St Leonards & St Ives	St John the Baptist Poulner	St Paul Bisterne	St Mary & All Saints Ellingham	All Saints Harbridge
Baptisms	24	2	0	1	4	0
Weddings	16	1	0	0	10	2
Funerals	22	6	3	4	2	1

Appendix 2

Looking back on our healthy Benefice in 10 years' time

When we try to plan a better future for our Church, it's easy to start off from where we are and what we know, but very hard to imagine how to improve things. Another approach is to take a leap of faith and imagine a 10-year journey, during which we had achieved all we wanted to. How would that feel, what would our Church be like?

Heavens, we've achieved a lot!

Having successfully recruited a new Vicar who arrived in early 2024, the Benefice now incorporates the stimulating addition of SLSI and has taken on a new lease of life. There is a strong sense of unified purpose amongst parishioners, and the church locally has been *energized by Faith*¹. We are no longer focused on buildings or finance, but God, people and worship. It's been great to be at the spiritual centre of the recovery from the economic recession, and the damage caused by Covid to the young.

Incomers and enquirers to Ringwood, welcomed to the church for the first time, comment on how lively and relevant the services seem, with an offering for people of diverse ages and worshipping interests. People are moved to experience God's love and engage with the Scriptures. This is because we asked penetrating questions of ourselves and found new answers.

Since the adoption of the Seven Marks of a Healthy Church, it has proved easier to find out how to grow the church both in numbers and more importantly in the depth of the offering. Although the principles behind a Healthy Church were well known to the parish, the ability to think about individual ambitions within our plan has benefitted us enormously. It has brought *a unified discipline to our thinking*, and a *general understanding by all of what we are trying to achieve in our mission priority*. *We have an outward-looking focus, we operate as a community.*

This has led to an increase in voluntary giving which has begun to bridge the shortfall in finances. *Suddenly, these personal sacrifices seem worthwhile, not just a routine obligation*. We still live hand-to-mouth *but we take risks and are confident in our survival* because all around us are signs that we are "Doing the Right Things". *The leadership of this Parish brings the lay and ordained together to work for the seven marks of a healthy church. The lay ministers are valued for their expression in and beyond the life of the Church*

¹ *Italics* indicate specific reference to the summary of the 7 Marks of a Healthy Church by R. Warren.

Earlier work since 2023 *with younger people has borne fruit*, bringing in both family members and their friends. Various youth-led projects, including the writing of significantly attractive hymns and prayers using the dynamic thoughts and musical talents of the young. In turn, this has led to older parishioners, attracted by the poetry and more stimulating music, to enjoy and even contribute to the modern variants of Services. A parish-wide competition to compose poetry and music led to 500 people connecting with the Church, and the winner won national attention in the media. We even found a corporate backer to cover our costs and design the communications.

Working with Ringwood School, Moorlands College and Bournemouth University, the website has been constantly upgraded by helpers in touch with media, and the Competition brought talent to the aid of the Church locally.

Indeed, the Church has actively sought to shine light on the latent talents of the community, to energize our worship. *This engagement with talent includes searching out new avenues with different social and ethnic backgrounds, mental and physical abilities, of all ages. Often, we are finding that small groups are the entry point for nurturing relationships with the Church.*

Increasingly, we are seen by the Diocese as a fine example of a Church recovering to full health and exercising its talents. *We are beginning to do fewer things but do them very well and are becoming relaxed about what we can't do.*

Ringwood Benefice subscribes to the safeguarding policies and guidelines of the Church of England and is committed to safeguarding as an integral part of the life and ministry of the Church.

<https://www.ringwoodbenefice.org.uk/safeguarding/>