

Profile for a **Priest in Charge** for the benefice covering the North Hampshire Downs.

Comprising the 4 parishes of Baughurst, Ramsdell, Wolverton with Ewhurst, and Hannington, and soon to be joining with Ashford Hill and Headley – see page 23.



We rejoice in our Christian faith and pray it will become an increasingly key part of the lives of our communities.

We support the **Church's Five Marks of Mission** and put them into action in an enthusiastic and caring way.

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WELCOME TO THE DIOCESE

Thank you for your interest in coming to minister here in this Diocese.

We serve a whole range of diverse communities from the historic city of Winchester with our glorious cathedral, to the great port city of Southampton, the burgeoning boroughs of Basingstoke, Bournemouth and Christchurch, thriving market towns such as Andover, Alton, Alresford and Romsey, and innumerable picture-perfect Hampshire villages. In all that there is much wealth—but there is also significant deprivation in our large urban conurbations where our churches support some of the Diocese’s poorest communities.

In every context, we are committed to making the love and life of Jesus Christ known, through our churches, schools and chaplaincies, in a way that makes a tangible difference to those communities and their people. We do this through our common commitment to ‘Walking the Wessex Way’: in Winchester’s past we find a rich heritage of serving, learning, growing and loving which inspires us for the future.

In many ways the Diocese of Winchester is in transition, as is the world around us. In parish ministry, we seek people who are aware of the challenges that we face, but who are motivated to address them above all by faith, hope and love. We welcome those who are committed to help God’s church to be the very best it can be, in the power of the Spirit, releasing all God’s people into the mission and ministry to which they are called. And we recognise too our need to develop in diversity.

We are excited by the opportunities before us, and warmly invite applications from those who want to join us in addressing them. With the assurance of my prayers as you seek God’s best next step for you.

+ *Philip*



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

BASINGSTOKE DEANERY

The Basingstoke Deanery comprises 16 parishes with a total population of approximately 143,000. Basingstoke has a population of 112,000 and is ranked among the best places to live in the country. Around it, lie some of the most beautiful villages and countryside in Hampshire.

The population of Basingstoke is set to continue increasing in the next 15 years. Employment is among the highest in the country. Different communities get on well together. Basingstoke and its environs are a good place to live with road and rail links to London, the West Country and the North.

The Deanery chapter is among the largest in the Diocese with its 16 parishes, and hospital and hospice chaplains. Our focus is on supporting our clergy and building inter-parish cooperation for the sake of mission. We have great ecumenical networks, and growing partnerships with other churches.

We welcome enterprising clergy—team players—whose style of services reaches out to young people.

We offer a rich depth of experienced leaders, great lay leadership, ecumenical prayer networks and a generous and diverse spiritual life. Challenging times lie ahead, but we are strongly committed to supporting our clergy and their families in the demands of ministry.



**Revd Dr Ben Kautzer
Area Dean and Rector of
Oakley with Wootton St
Lawrence**

INTRODUCTION

Our parishes are within North Hampshire, between Newbury to the north and Basingstoke to the south. To the west, is the large village of Kingsclere (population: over 3,000) and to the east is Tadley (population: nearly 15,000), from which shops, doctors, dentists and so on can be accessed.

The parishes have a total population, according to the 2021 census data, of 3,603 with over half reporting Christianity as their stated religion. There are several schools in the area – see page 26 for more details.

We are seeking a Priest in Charge who is keen to get to know our communities, leading and growing our congregations and dedicated lay ministry team, with a passion for pastoral care and visiting people, particularly in times of need.

Each of the parishes has its own church, except Ashford Hill with Headley which has 2 churches, one for each village. Of the 6 churches, 2 are Grade 1 listed buildings (Hannington & Wolverton), while the other 4 are Grade 2 listed. Appendices 3 & 4 include a short description of each parish and their churches.



We are keen to attract a growing number of young families with children, teenagers and other young people living in and around the area. Our recently started Bubble Church now has over 40 children coming together with their parents (not all of these come every time, last Sunday we had 33 children).

You will reside in the vicarage at Ashford Hill, with a lovely garden and extensive views of the surrounding countryside. The house has recently been completely re-decorated by the Diocese. See page 13 for details. The PCCs have funds to assist the incoming Priest in charge with costs required to fit out the house.

Despite having been without an incumbent for over 4½ years, the parishes have become increasingly united and have a strong leadership team. Ashford Hill with Headley has been in a benefice with Kingsclere for approximately 15 years. As a parish, the two villages are closely united with characteristics of a rural village like those of Ramsdell, Baughurst, Wolverton with Ewhurst and Hannington.

OUR VISION

Each parish has its own active PCC, ideally to be retained helping provide local support to parishioners. The PCCs are open to establish a **benefice-wide team** to support our new leader in matters such as ministry, mission, pastoral care and visiting, training and social activities. Teamwork is the key to growing our church family and to make sure our leader is not put under unreasonable pressure. Given that many members of the PCCs are personal friends, there already exists a keen willingness to work together.

We wish each church to continue to hold **regular services**, usually but not exclusively, on a Sunday of both a traditional and contemporary style. Of course, this may seem to pose logistical challenges for the Priest in Charge, who will need to be prepared to conduct more than one service each Sunday. However, we have developed a **strong supporting ministry team** of both lay and ordained people. We enjoy benefice-wide services in months containing 5 Sundays and for other special occasions.

We believe one of the best ways to grow our Christian community is to get to **know the people**, whether they be of a Christian or other faith, or indeed of no faith. Knowing people, showing that we care for them, is the cornerstone of growing a strong and happy community. There are many events and activities across our villages which will help you get to know the community and build relationships with groups both inside and outside the regular church congregation. The villages have a rich and varied programme of church and village events including fetes, concerts, quizzes and picnics, to name but a few.



Our communities have a **strong youth element**. We would like to become more active within our local schools and with young people (some 20%) in our communities. We would like our new Priest in Charge to help in the recruitment of a youth and children's worker as a priority. We are already developing children's/family services with an active Bubble Church in place, helping to attract more children and young people, as we believe that they are the Church's future.

A foundation stone of our Christian communities should be **home, prayer and Bible study groups**, actively encouraged with new people being welcomed and then new groups being planted in new communities. We are keen to run courses such as Alpha, Christianity Explored, Discipleship Explored, not only in our churches or village halls but also in our homes.

We have 2 successful benefice/parish magazines and are keen to develop an active social media presence including a new benefice website to increase **communication**. We are grateful to be **financially** stable, none of our parishes are currently under financial pressure. However, we recognise we should be more active in gaining the further support within our communities.



OUR CHURCH LIFE

There are many initiatives we are keen and excited to progress with a new leader and develop ways forward.

Services

Our 5 parishes currently reflect the pattern in many parts of the UK—that is, a small number of regular congregants, mainly comprising older people, but a significantly larger number, including children, for the festival occasions through the year—that is, Christmas, Easter, Remembrance Sunday, Harvest Festival. Many of our churches enjoy between 100 to 150 people for these services but for a regular Sunday, this number is normally between 15 and 30 in each church. We variably use the liturgy of the Book of Common Prayer and Common Worship. In leading services, our clergy and lay readers are flexible in wearing robes or not, depending upon the occasion and style of the service. Music for our services is generally provided by organ but some of our churches do have sound systems to provide digital music. We would welcome live music to lead modern services.



Our current service patterns can be found in Appendix 2 on page 18. Some initiatives we would like to focus on include:

Benefice-wide services and activities—for example, more courses.

A range of children's services, at least once a month, including extending the Bubble Church format and attracting more families with young children and more young people to our churches.



In churches where the facilities allow – **kitchen, seats not pews, toilets** – to help provide services based around a lunch for all.



Mission and discipleship

We have some **home groups running** and parishioners would like more **Bible study** and **prayer groups**, these are organised currently by the groups themselves. They are not coordinated nor are they a springboard for the formation of new groups. We would like to encourage more of these to be established.

Likewise, we have held courses of various types—**Alpha, Christianity Explored, Discipleship Explored**—but these are spasmodic. We would like these to become a regular part of our church life and to be coordinated with adjoining benefices. Such initiatives need not take place in church; indeed, holding them in people's homes is often a better way to achieve fellowship and thus take-up.

Pastoral care and visiting

Most of our churches make wonderful venues for baptisms, weddings and funerals. St Paul's church at Ashford Hill, for example, can seat up to 275 people and has been the venue for some uplifting thanksgiving services.

We would encourage our new Priest in Charge to develop a team of people to visit the sick and troubled; give home communion where this is wanted; visit the bereaved; and welcome newcomers into our communities. This already happens but could be greatly enhanced with better coordination.



Children and young people

Following COVID, we have reintroduced children's services and want to develop these further. We have recently started to attend assemblies at Ashford Hill Primary School and would like to extend this to other schools within the benefice. We encourage school nativity plays and carol concerts to be held in our churches. We would love to employ the services of a Youth and Children's worker; some funding has recently been identified.



Social and community outreach

Jesus taught us to love our neighbour, and we strongly believe the foundation of any happy and vibrant community is an active interchange with our fellow villagers and neighbours. We want our churches to become places where concerts are held; lectures take place; meals can be shared. To achieve this, we need not only to have the right facilities, but we also need an active organising committee. This is often difficult for individual villages to achieve but across the benefice it should be possible. We are currently exploring starting up a choir for dementia sufferers, their carers and loved ones, with a new Priest in Charge, we hope to make this possible.

We currently support food banks and community larders in adjoining parishes. Likewise, we regularly support the Camrose Centre, a homeless charity in Basingstoke.

Summary

We have plenty of ideas and with the support of a new leader, who we believe will come new skills, ideas and energy, we believe we have the determination, commitment and passion to work together. This we believe will help build a stronger community and increase the provision of Christian and other religious activities for the community within the five parishes.



OUR TEAMS

Below are brief details of the key people in each of the 5 parishes.

Hannington

Martin Frewer - Churchwarden and Chairman of the PCC.

An active PCC of seven meeting quarterly. We have a charity 'The Friends of All Saints' with its own management committee proactively putting on church events to help fund the upkeep and fabric to keep the church at the centre of village life.

Among the dedicated Hannington team are:

- **Mark and Juliet Burton** Mark have been leading morning prayer services in Hannington for over 30 years. Juliet is Chairman of The Friends of All Saints and Secretary to the PCC.
- **Sarah Maitland** is a member of the PCC and founding Trustee of the Friends of All Saints. She also arranges our Sunday church reader rota.
- **Tracy Dickinson** - Treasurer of the PCC.



Juliet Burton and Martin Frewer



Wolverton with Ewhurst

Simon de Boinville - Churchwarden and members of our PCC

With a team of 6 we share the responsibilities of maintaining and running the church, including Sarah Maltby, Secretary; David Tosh, Treasurer; supported by Sarah Sladen and Lucy Daniel.

Ramsdell

Our PCC comprises 6 parish members.

David Finch; Churchwarden, James Lee; Treasurer and Sue Bailey our secretary with support from Janet Markwick, Daphne Oliver-Bellasis and Mike Le Flufy.

Janet and Miles Roberts help lead our lay matins and family services,



Baughurst



At Baughurst we have a PCC with 5 members including Churchwarden Rob McMordie, a peal of 6 Bells is rung most weeks and the church has the most wonderful windows. The picture is from our bi-annual flower festival.



Ashford Hill with Headley

We have a PCC of 7 people led by Churchwardens Patrick Taylor and Penny Stewart. Patrick is a member of the Diocesan Synod. We are regularly supported by retired priest, Neil Britton, who lives locally.



OUR ORGANISATION

Governance

We are keen to become an increasingly united benefice and prepared to consider the establishment of standing committees to deal with matters such as ministry, mission, and pastoral care across the benefice.

However, we are not prepared to combine our finances or overall governance into a single PCC, as we believe our current decentralised approach is more effective in building local links and retaining commitment. We will work hard to help make sure the incumbent's focus is on ministry and mission rather than too heavily on administrative governance. We are already exploring ways to standardise our systems to enable reporting, admin and governance to be as quick and easy as possible.

We have a wonderfully active lay ministry team and regular visiting priests from the registry. We hope that the new incumbent will give encouragement and guidance to these people by, for example, issuing a guidance note each week as to the messages to be given when preaching on the forthcoming Sunday.

Safeguarding

We understand the importance of safeguarding to ensure that our churches are safe places for all those who visit them. We are committed to following good safeguarding policies and practices across all our parishes.

Finances

Despite losses made by 4 of the 5 parishes in 2023, owing largely to one off capital expenditure, each of our parishes is currently financially sound with aggregate reserves more than £324,000. The only significant church needing work is St Paul's, Ashford Hill where the floor will need extensive repair within the next few years. The PCCs are confident that the funding to do this work will be readily achievable.

All our parishes are committed to paying their Common Mission Fund requests once an incumbent is in post.



THE HOUSE

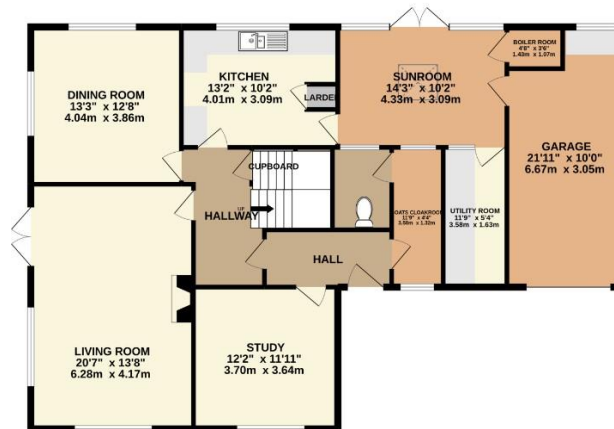
Ashford Hill Vicarage is situated in a rural setting adjoining St Paul's church, Ashford Hill. It is accessed by a private driveway off the church carpark and stands within its own garden overlooking the beautiful surrounding countryside. There is parking for several cars on the driveway. The vicarage is a short walk to the village primary school and the centre of the village.

The accommodation consists of 5 bedrooms, a family bathroom and separate WC on the first floor. Downstairs there is a large study and cloakroom, living room, dining room and kitchen. A sunroom and utility room are accessed through the kitchen and/or garage.

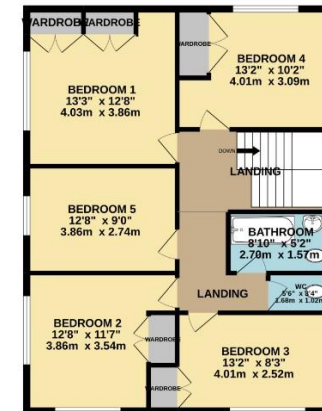
The Diocese property department has recently re-decorated the entire house following many years of letting to a 3rd party tenant. In addition to the funds provided by the Diocese for moving to the Benefice, the PCC of Ashford Hill with Headley has retained some funds to help the successful candidate with the costs of equipping the house.



GROUND FLOOR
1397 sq.ft. (129.8 sq.m.) approx.



1ST FLOOR
873 sq.ft. (81.1 sq.m.) approx.



TOTAL FLOOR AREA: 2271 sq.ft. (210.9 sq.m.) approx.

Whilst every attempt has been made to ensure the accuracy of the floorplan contained here, measurements of doors, windows, rooms and any other items are approximate and no responsibility is taken for any error, omission or mis-statement. This plan is for illustrative purposes only and should be used as such by any prospective purchaser. The services, systems and appliances shown have not been tested and no guarantee as to their operability or efficiency can be given.
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ROLE DESCRIPTION

The role is for a Priest in Charge for the 'Hampshire North Downs' benefice comprising Bughurst, Ramsdell, Wolverton with Ewhurst, Hannington plus the parish of Ashford Hill with Headley. The PCCs will encourage the successful candidate to balance his/her time with family and friends with the demands of parish life.

As our Priest in Charge, we are seeking someone who:

Spirituality

- Follows an ordered personal, spiritual life of daily prayer and Bible study and shares the fruits of his/her own discipleship with others.

Worship and preaching

- Lead the Church community in worship and prayer through an active programme of services, Bible reading & prayer groups and other channels that are deemed appropriate. Lead worship across all parishes and preach in a variety of services across the benefice.
- Preach the Word of God clearly in ways that will engage a wide-ranging audience of both young and old.
- Welcome people who are at different stages of their faith journey, and welcome different styles of faith and forms of worship.
- Support and lead outreach initiatives to those outside the church family.
- Encourage individual reading of scripture.
- Support and encourage the ministry of lay people.



Leadership and collaboration

- Understands 'servant leadership', and is a keen and proven team player, committed to working collaboratively with the worship team and PCCs.
- Help to develop our existing benefice-wide ministry team.
- Develop, with the PCCs, a clear vision of how to grow our church community and will develop a strategy to deliver that vision.
- Be supportive of and involved with the Diocese and the Deanery, including Chapter and Synod, to ensure that our church family is actively and enthusiastically represented; and the interests of the wider church are supported.

Discipleship, learning and nurture

- Is open and creative in his/her approach to Christian discipleship and spiritual growth and is strongly committed to seeing God's people grow and mature in faith and use their gifts in God's service.

- Develop a programme of learning and fellowship through courses.
- Build on the relationships we have with our local schools.
- Actively encourage home groups and draw others in to begin or develop their discipleship.
- Prepared to lead or co-lead outreach and discipleship courses and committed to the growth of small groups.

Evangelism and engagement with social justice

- Proactive and persuasive in sharing their faith with others and can enable others to gain confidence to do the same.
- Support some traditional services which are helpful to many, and that God uses old and new alike.
- Reflects theologically and looks to see where God is working.
- Has a heart for mission.

Pastoral care

- Is approachable and sensitive to the varied pastoral needs of our church family and wider community.
- Will build an enthusiastic and dedicated team to undertake pastoral care work.
- Wants to be at the heart of our parishes and has a passion for rural ministry.
- Will involve him/herself in the life of the local community by attending events throughout the benefice.



Stewardship and parish organisation

- Will exhibit and proactively encourage generosity in the discipleship of church members, in the giving of their time, talents and money.
- Will fully participate in and contribute to the life of the deanery (including synod and chapter) and diocese.

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

For the successful applicant to undertake the role of Priest in Charge, we believe he/she should be a person with the following specific **personal attributes—a person who:**

- Is a strong, experienced and inspiring leader with a warm empathetic character; is clearly interested in people and will share and discuss his/her thoughts about plans, issues and/or problems with key members of the support team.
- Is willing to delegate responsibilities to his/her core support team—for example, in the sharing of the chairmanship of PCC meetings.
- Is passionate about pastoral care and visiting at times of need, particularly for those who are ill, infirm or nearing end of life.
- Is open to allowing people to use our churches for community-based events such as concerts, debates and so on.

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:

The Ven Richard Brand
Archdeacon of Winchester, richard.brand@winchester.anglican.org

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

APPENDICES

Appendix 1—Some key statistics regarding the 5 parishes (sourceCofE parish data)

Population data

	Population	Area m ²	Population density per m ²	Deprivation rank (12,239 being the least deprived in England)	No. of occupied households	Percent of population Christian	Percent of population no religion
AH + Headley	1,747	6.4	273	10,457	665	54.2%	44.1%
Hannington	332	7.8	43	4,713	144	58.8%	40.2%
Wolverton	215	3.5	61	8,550	94	57.5%	40.6%
Ramsdell	511	2.4	213	10,921	204	49.4%	47.9%
Baughurst	798	3.0	266	10,136	317	57.6%	39.8%
	3,603	23.1	156		1,424	54.9%	43.1%

The age profiles of the 5 parishes are broadly similar:

<u>Percentage of population by age:</u>	<u>AH + H</u>	<u>Hann.</u>	<u>Wolv.</u>	<u>Rams.</u>	<u>Baug.</u>
% aged 0-4	5.2	4.4	3.2	4.1	3.1
% aged 5-19	19.4	13.3	16.1	19.6	16.4
% aged 20-29	6.3	9.4	8.6	4.5	6.7
% aged 30-44	16.0	12.5	13.0	15.0	13.9
% aged 45-69	38.9	39.9	41.2	40.6	39.3
% aged 70 and over	14.3	20.6	17.9	16.2	20.5

According to the Diocesan Common Mission Fund figures, the worshipping communities, averaged over the past 5 years, for each parish are:

<u>2024 worshipping community:</u>	<u>AH + H</u>	<u>Hann.</u>	<u>Wolv.</u>	<u>Rams.</u>	<u>Baug.</u>
per CMF figs	26	18	10	20	14
Percentage of Christian population	2.7%	9.2%	8.1%	7.8%	3.0%

Appendix 2— Our current order of services in a typical month

Hampshire North Downs Benefice

<u>Date</u>	<u>Church</u>	<u>Service type</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Leader</u>
1 st				
Sunday	Ramsdell	Holy Communion	8:00am	BCP
	Hannington	Children's Service + HC	9:30am	CW
	Wolverton	Holy Communion	11:00am	CW
	Baughurst	Songs of Praise	11:00am	Lay led
2 nd				
Sunday	Ramsdell	Family Service	9:30am	
	Hannington	Morning Prayer	9:30am	Lay led
	Wolverton	No Service		
	Baughurst	Holy Communion	11:00am	CW
3 rd				
Sunday	Ramsdell	Morning Prayer	9:30am	Lay led
	Hannington	Holy Communion	9:30am	BCP
	Wolverton	Morning Prayer	11:00am	Lay led
	Baughurst	Informal Service	11:00am	Lay led
4 th				
Sunday	Ramsdell	Holy Communion	9:30am	CW
	Hannington	Morning Prayer	9:30am	Lay led
	Wolverton	No Service		
	Baughurst	Holy Communion	11:00am	BCP

Ashford Hill with Headley Parish

<u>Church</u>	<u>Service type</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Leader</u>
Headley	Holy Communion	9:30am	Revd. Neil Britton
Headley	Morning Worship	9:30am	Lay led
Ashford Hill	Bubble Church	9:30am	Lay led
Ashford Hill	Morning Worship	9:30am	Lay led
Ashford Hill	Holy Communion	9:30am	Revd. Pete Williams

Services not shown as lay led are taken by one of the regular ordained clergy, who have been supporting the benefice; and have indicated their willingness to continue to do so.

Appendix 3—Brief description of each parish

Hannington

Hannington is in an area of outstanding natural beauty on the Hampshire Downs and is surrounded by farmland with spectacular views in all directions. The outlying hamlets of North Oakley, Ibworth, White Lane and Plantation Farm are close by.

The population of approximately 332 covers all generations with a lot of young families having moved into the village in recent years. As a result, there is a thriving monthly children’s service and other activities for the children in the church, such as film shows, Easter egg hunts and a Christingle service.

Services are held every Sunday at 9.30am. On the first Sunday of the month a short Holy Communion service follows the children’s service and one of several retired clergy come to take another Holy Communion service a fortnight later. On the Sundays in between there is a lay-led Morning Prayer—or occasionally Evensong—taken by one of the six experienced parishioners who share these services between them. In addition to Christmas and Easter, we have a full church for Harvest Festival, Mothering Sunday, Remembrance Day and a pet service.

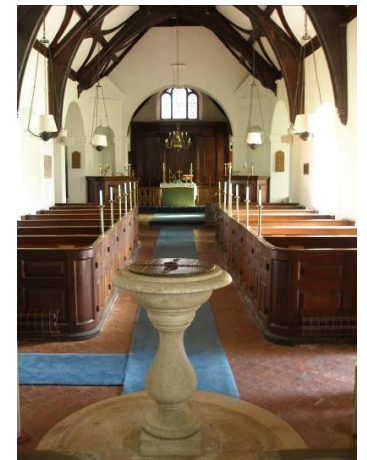
It is a very welcoming and friendly community with the village pub ‘The Vine’ soon to be reopened, village WhatsApp and email group, a wine society, a book club, playgroup, coffee morning and many different keep fit classes. The village also hosts a biennial country fair which attracts several thousand people and makes a substantial profit, which—after donations to local charities—is shared among the various activities that take place in Hannington, including All Saints Church.

Wolverton with Ewhurst

This is a rural parish of predominantly arable and woodland covering several settlements: Wolverton Common is a hamlet of some 40 dwellings; Wolverton Townsend is another hamlet with nearly 30 dwellings, a pub and a village hall; there are further settlements at Kingsclere Estate Farm on the A339 and at Ewhurst Park. Most parishioners are in full-time employment. Many of the children attend either the Clere School at Burghclere, the primary school at Ashford Hill, or are privately educated. The parish has few retired people.

St Catherine’s Wolverton is a Grade 1 listed church, described by Sir Nikolaus Pevsner as ‘the finest example of an early Georgian church in Hampshire’. The bell tower was built around 1716. Sound reinforcement and a hearing loop, a biodegradable WC and kitchen facilities within the original vestry have all been installed in recent years. We have disabled access and a car park.

We used to have three services a month offering Common Worship and Common Prayer on the 1st and 3rd Sundays respectively, and the 2nd Sunday was a lay led Family Service; however, the vacancy has taken its toll. Despite this, the church is always full at Christmas and Easter.



We have only one churchwarden. The PCC is well supported with 6 members, all of whom contribute fully. There is an organist who has rarely missed a service in over 43 years. There is a rota for the year covering cleaning, flowers, and readings. The churchyard is kept in excellent order by a volunteer system.

Ramsdell

Ramsdell is a typical English village, the focal point of which is the crossroads right in the centre. Christ Church is located on one corner of the crossroads with the village hall next door. There are approximately 320 homes with an increasing number of younger families moving into the village in recent years.

Events in Ramsdell include weekly cricket matches in the summer, a bi-annual fete, and an annual village tennis tournament. There is also a monthly ladies' club meeting in the village hall. The local pub is the White Hart.

In 2023 the village shop was re-opened and is now a bustling café, shop and regular stopping point for cyclists and passing traffic. The village shop runs a Friday evening curry night—eat in or takeaway—which has become a hugely popular place to catch up with village gossip, friends and colleagues. Along with the recently opened village hall, we now have more regular classes, events and activities taking place.

The new village hall

In 2016, the village realised that their much-loved village hall, a WWII Nissan hut, had finally reached the end of its life.

A small working party was formed to prepare a future facing plan. In December 2017, planning permission was granted to build a new village hall. The new site is adjacent to the church, at the very heart of the village on glebe land secured on a 125-year lease from the Diocese of Winchester. The project has taken 5 years to complete and involved raising just shy of £900,000. The project



united the villagers in a common cause and became a positive force for change and evolution. Through a range of fundraising activities involving everyone in the village, we successfully secured the funds from a wide range of national and local councils, heritage, and other trust funds. Over half the money was raised through community activities from Buy a Brick schemes, auctions of promises, and tea and cake stalls, often in association with matched funding grants and local business support. The hall was built during COVID and opened in October 2022 to much applause. Here are a few images.



As part of the leasehold agreement, the church has primary access to the hall free of charge on Sundays and can book the hall on four other dates across the year free, providing booking is made 3 months in advance. The hall now has a vibrant range of activities taking place on a regular basis and has enriched village life.

The space is perfect for running a messy church group and everyone is keen to bring young members of the community together in new and exciting ways. Our Harvest Supper has already taken place twice in the new hall, with regular quiz nights, wine tasting and other community events bringing parishioners and villagers together. The village hall is a registered CIO 1177240, and two trustees who must be members of the PCC or regular church goers.

The Ramsdell cricket club has a strong membership with teams participating in four leagues, a youth team, and a pipeline of youth training groups. It is situated on the village recreation field with the tennis court and children's play area.



Baughurst

St Stephen's parish covers approximately four-square miles in the North of Hampshire. It consists of around 320 homes inhabited by up to 800 people. Within its boundaries are two pubs, a well-known restaurant, two nursery schools and Heath End Hall, which is used for church events.

The church parish forms part of Baughurst civil parish with a total population of around 2,460 and borders onto the small town of Tadley to the east of the village with a population of over 7,600.

The church parish population is widely scattered across mainly mixed pastoral land with small woods, a copse and streams crisscrossed with footpaths. The land is still farmed and there are longstanding families in the area.

A large proportion of the inhabitants are retired. Those employed work at the nearby Aldermaston Atomic Weapons Establishment or further afield at Reading, Basingstoke and Newbury or even commute daily to London.

The nearby town of Tadley meets daily needs with shops, doctors, dentists, a library, three primary schools and a health and fitness centre with a swimming pool, gym and facilities for all ages.

Ashford Hill with Headley

The villages of Ashford Hill and Headley are significantly rural communities. They look to Kingsclere or Tadley as their hub for shops and other facilities such as doctors, dentists or library.

Both villages have a church, although happily there is a strong community approach with people from each village supporting services in the other. St Paul's is a large church with capacity for 275 people. It is well known for its fantastic acoustics and large car park with the result that it is a favourite for weddings and funerals/thanksgiving services. There are plans to upgrade some of the facilities at St Paul's so that a more active series of concerts, lectures and other community gatherings can be enjoyed within the church. Headley's church, St Peter's, is a small cosy church with an intimate chapel-like feel to it.

Headley has a well-supported community shop. While neither village has a pub any longer, there are clubs that meet frequently in one of the two village halls. Both villages have lovely recreation grounds with children's playgrounds. Ashford Hill enjoys very active cricket, football and gardening clubs. The beautiful Ashford Hill Water Meadows is a site of special scientific interest (SSSI). Our villages used to hold annual fetes on alternate years, although—since the COVID pandemic—in Ashford Hill this has rather fallen by the wayside, but not so in Headley!

The newly set up Bubble church is thriving and growing quickly, all parishes are keen to expand and join up in this exciting activity to engage with more families and children.



THE PROPOSED WAY FORWARD FOR OUR PARISHES

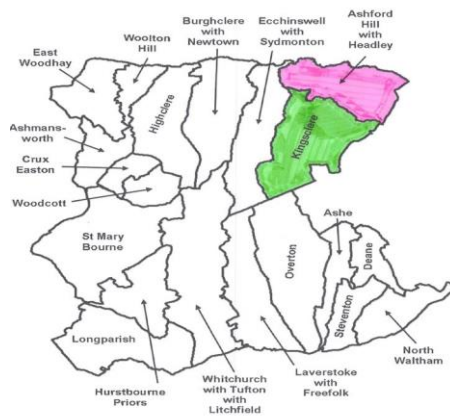
The 4 parishes in the Hampshire North Downs benefice fall within the Basingstoke Deanery. We are seeking a Priest in Charge for this benefice who will be offered the vicarage house, which sits next to St Paul's church in the adjoining parish of Ashford Hill with Headley, this parish is currently within the benefice of Kingsclere and Ashford Hill with Headley (Kingsclere benefice), falling within the Whitchurch Deanery.

Given that the successful applicant will be living in the parish of Ashford Hill with Headley, it is proposed that the newly appointed Priest in Charge will also take responsibility for the parish of Ashford Hill with Headley, this being by agreement with the current incumbent of the Kingsclere benefice.

In due course, it is proposed that a pastoral scheme will be entered into whereby (a) the parish of Ashford Hill with Headley will become part of the Hampshire North Downs benefice, and (b) this benefice will be transferred into the Whitchurch Deanery. The process for such a pastoral scheme, if approved, could take between one and two years to implement the paperwork. However in the meantime the parishes and benefices have already started to work together.

Due to these proposed changes, the role is to be a three year CTIP (Common Tenure Interim Post). Assuming all works out well with these changes, it is the intention that the role will evolve into a longer term position.

Whitchurch
Deanery parishes



Basingstoke Deanery
parishes



Winchester Diocese
Deaneries



Appendix 4—Photos of our 6 churches



All Saints' Church, **Hannington**, with the north wall in the middle of the picture going back to Saxon times, is a Grade 1 listed building. The church has been added to over the centuries; latterly in the 1850s with an extension. Recently a full set of bells has been installed in a newly enlarged bell chamber.



Built in 1717, St Catherine's, **Wolverton** has been described as the best Early Georgian church in Hampshire. It has a very powerful, high and broad west tower of light red brick with alternating raised stone quoins, a doorway with big rustication of alternating sizes, and a top parapet. If the church appears disproportionately low in comparison, the reason is that it was only a re-casing; inside, the roof is medieval. St Catherine's is a Grade 1 listed building.



Christ Church, **Ramsdell** is a Grade 2 listed building and was built in 1867 in brick and flint with a clay tile roof. The bricks were provided by the Ramsdell brickworks. In 1876 the tower on the south-west corner was added; it contains a single bell which can be tolled and sounds the hour with the turret clock. This has recently been fully refurbished with the addition of an electric winding mechanism.

Inside there are simple pews seating about 120. There is a small pipe organ and choir stalls in the chancel which has a decorated ceiling.

The churchyard surrounds the church and accommodates burials and the interment of ashes.



St Stephen's Church, **Baughurst** is a Grade 2* listed building. It was erected in 1845 on the site of a previous 12th century building which had partly fallen. It is built of flint and stone in the Early English style and consists of a chancel, nave and south porch. It has a 100-foot spire containing six bells. The font is 15th century. The interior has a 15th century oak screen originally dividing the chancel and nave but now surrounding a large organ at the west end. Its pews offer seating for about 120 people.



St Paul's Church, **Ashford Hill** is a Victorian Gothic church with a spire whose foundations were laid in October 1844. The church was consecrated on 2 December 1845. The spire was completed in 1850. Set in its own large churchyard, the church building offers a light, airy and flexible interior with an excellent organ and acoustics and can seat up to 275 people. It is often used for concerts.



St Peter's Church, **Headley** is a small red brick chapel-style church on the west side of the A339 next to the village hall. It offers a small intimate worship space, seating about 60 people in pews. It is surrounded by a peaceful and well-kept churchyard.

Appendix 6—Schools in the parishes

Within the parish of Ashford Hill and Headley there are 3 schools—namely, Cheam, Ashford Hill Primary and Jiminy Crickets.

- **Cheam** <https://www.cheamschool.co.uk/>—is one of the country’s leading private co-ed pre-prep and prep schools, attended by approximately 400 children (aged 3 - 13). Cheam is in Headley. King Charles was a pupil here. Most of the children are now day pupils; so many of their families live within, or close to, one of the 5 parishes. Cheam refers to itself as ‘affiliated to the Anglican faith’ and has a daily assembly and a Saturday chapel service to which parents are invited.
- **Ashford Hill Primary School** is an academy school—<https://www.ashfordhillprimary.co.uk/>—with approximately 140 children (aged 4 - 11). The new headmistress is very keen for the school to become closely allied with our local church. We have recently begun a programme of attending assemblies monthly. Additionally, the school performs its nativity play in the church. They also use the church for harvest festivals and for their carol service.
- **Jiminy Crickets** is a pre-school based in the cricket pavilion on Ashford Hill recreation ground. It can take a maximum of 20 children per session (aged 2 to school age). Its aim is to provide a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment, where the child is valued as an individual and can learn through play and develop at their own pace. Childcare is provided by qualified and highly experienced staff, ensuring a high standard of care with low child: staff ratios.

Within the Baughurst parish there are two schools, namely:

- The **Hurst School** sits on the boundary of the parish. It is a state secondary school run by the local education authority, taking children from 11 to 16. It has approximately 1,000 students, many of whom come from Tadley and villages to the east.
<https://www.thehurst.school/>
- **The Children’s House** is a privately run Montessori school, taking children from 2 - 7 years old.
<https://montessorigranthamfarm.co.uk/>

In Ramsdell, there is another privately run Montessori school, **Tiny Tots**, for approximately 50 children aged up to 5 years old.

<https://www.little-tots.co.uk/stoney-heath>