

Vicar

New Forest Edge Benefice

In the deanery of Christchurch

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Welcome to Winchester Diocese

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 too, especially in our large urban conurbations where our churches are supporting 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.

In parish ministry we seek people who are aware of the challenges that we face, but who are motivated above all by faith, hope and love in addressing them. 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

Christchurch Deanery

A very warm welcome to Christchurch Deanery and thank you for expressing an interest in the post of Vicar of the Benefice of the New Forest Edge.

The deanery is (we believe) set in one of the most beautiful parts of the Diocese of Winchester. It is relatively small with seven benefices and 26 churches which encompass a range of church traditions, theology and spirituality. The deanery straddles both Hampshire and Dorset and consists of a mix of small towns and villages. On the doorstep there is the wonderful countryside of the New Forest and within easy reach are miles of award-winning coastline and beaches which often provide plenty of scope for inspiration, leisure and time off.

A number of the clergy in the deanery are relatively new in post and as a result bring a new energy to the area. The deanery leadership are new in post and have a deep desire for the deanery to flourish and for it to be a place of collegiality and prayerful support of each other. Priority is being given to meeting and praying together on a regular basis. We have Deanery links with Kinkiizi in Uganda as well as worshipping together in a Deanery service for Ascension Day.

There are, of course, the challenges that come with any post. However, the person appointed will have the support of an active deanery leadership team as well as a well-resourced and supportive diocesan office. As a diocese we have a new story and vision 'Walking the Wessex Way' that encourage us all to be proud of the heritage and journey so far as well as being inspired to reflect and pray about what more is possible.

I very much hope that the new Vicar of the New Forest Edge will be able to play an active part in the wider deanery as we seek to work and pray together, support and resource each other.

Thank you for expressing an interest in applying for this post at a really important time in the benefice's and deanery's life. We very much look forward to welcoming whomever is appointed.



Revd Canon Michael Smith
Area Dean of Christchurch and Bournemouth

Our Benefice at a Glance



**Active, engaged
ministry team & PCCs**



**Strong fellowship & good
neighbourhood links**



**A varied mix of traditional
& modern music**



**A welcoming benefice
for all ages**



**A vicarage on the edge
of the New Forest**



**Links with local
schools**

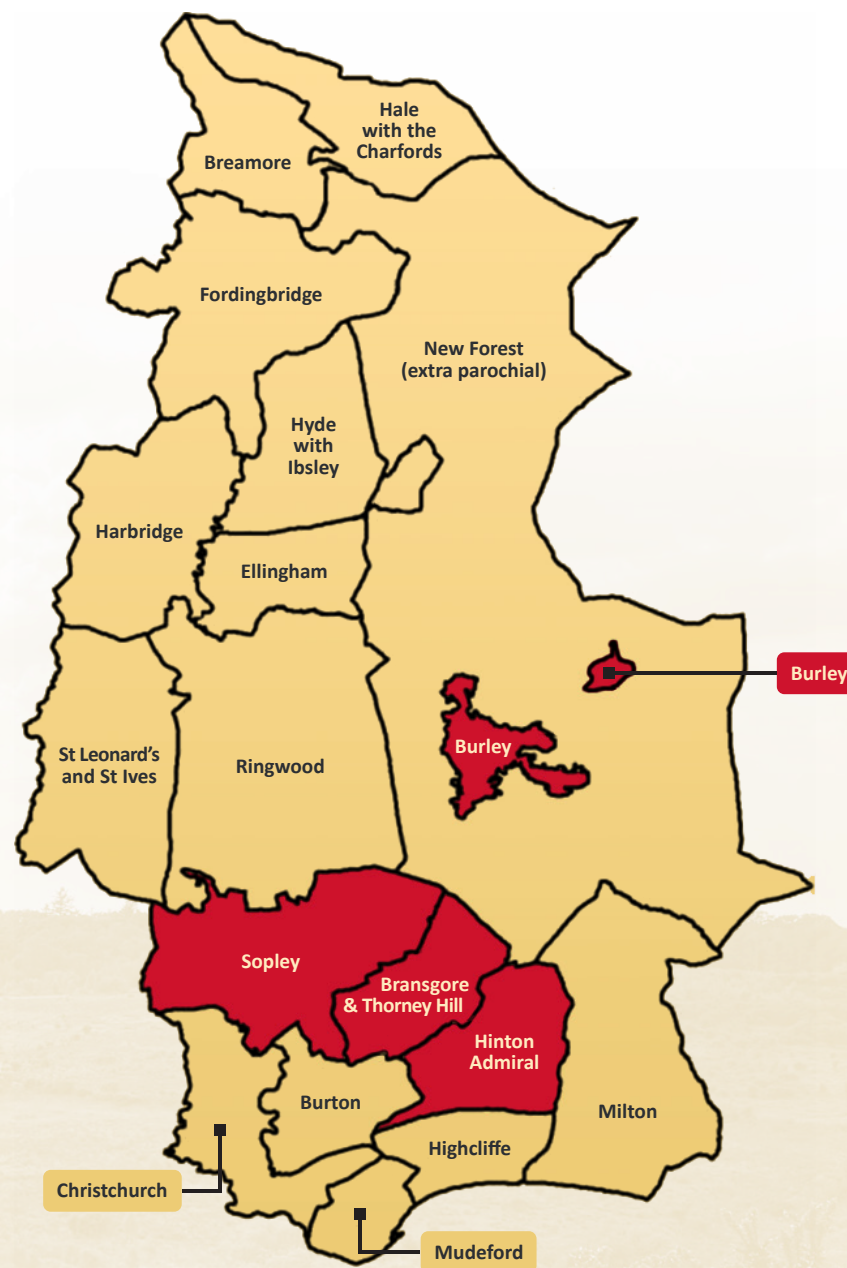
Our Hope

Our benefice, comprising of five churches, seeks a confident leader who will inspire a strong and loving ministry team to work together for the continuing growth of the Kingdom of God, through the power of His word, with creativity, collaboration, and prayerful vision, building up disciples of Jesus Christ to serve by the Holy Spirit and reaching out into the community with the gospel.

We seek a leader who will:

- help us continue to grow as a benefice that is outward-looking, Christ-centred, and Bible based.
- work closely with congregations across the benefice, bringing unity, encouragement, and a shared sense of mission.
- engage with partnerships, both existing and new, especially with our village schools and wider community networks.
- embrace both innovation and tradition, welcoming new ideas while honouring the richness of Anglican worship and heritage.

This post offers an exciting range of leadership possibilities across varied churches and communities, giving the chance to shape ministry in ways that reach hearts and transform lives with Jesus, all situated in the gorgeous New Forest a short distance from the beautiful coast.



Our Vision

In the New Forest Edge Benefice, we want to serve our local communities with the good news of Jesus Christ who came to give his life as a ransom for many. Our passion is to see our congregations across five church buildings thriving and growing in Christian maturity and witness. Our prayer is that God will be glorified as each church responds to the particular needs and opportunities of its local context.

Each church offers faithful biblical preaching which aspires to be engaging and accessible, consistent with mainstream Christianity in the Anglican tradition. We seek to be a benefice of generous orthodoxy, clear on our convictions and loving in our engagement with others.

Each church honours God by developing a clear sense of church family and fellowship in which everyone is welcomed, loved, supported, challenged and encouraged.

We strongly believe that our churches should play an active role in our communities, particularly to help others to come to know God - the church in the community, and the community in the church. Our desire is to draw people into the church by holding regular events within and outside the church buildings as part of the broad mission of God.



Church Life Across the Benefice

At the heart of our benefice is a desire to proclaim Christ faithfully and clearly. We are committed to grounding all that we do in God's word. While we value the rhythm of the Lectionary, we intentionally shape our Sunday services around expository sermon series, journeying together through books of the Bible across all our churches.

Discipleship continues beyond Sundays. Bible study groups meet throughout the week across the benefice, helping us grow deeper in our knowledge and love of the Lord. We also periodically run weekday evening events, retreats and trips for senior members.

Throughout the year we come together for benefice-wide events such as joint services on fifth Sundays of the month, our weekly Saturday morning sea swimming group, summer BBQs and other times of fellowship where our extended church family unites in the name of Christ.

Since going into vacancy in summer 2025, the relationship between the churches has deepened and there is an increasing commitment to shared ministry and meeting together.

Our churches place great value on ministry with children and families. We run Explorers and Pathfinders children's groups on Sundays at St Mary's, and Little Stars, a thriving toddler group, during the week.

Music enriches our sung worship across the Benefice. All our churches have an organ, Burley and Hinton have their own choirs, and Bransgore is blessed with a contemporary band (guitar, piano and cajon). Together, these gifts enable us to glorify God in a rich variety of ways.



Church Life Across the Benefice

As well as activities aimed at discipleship, we have a rich network of relationships with our local communities.

We run regular Christianity Explored courses, or similar evangelistic offerings, based in varying locations across the benefice, or partnered with Bransgore Community Church, with whom we also support a community coffee shop. Each congregation also welcomes community members for special seasonal services throughout the year.

We have strong links with the Church of England primary school in Bransgore, leading weekly assemblies, welcoming the school into the St Mary's building for various services over the year and receiving many visitors to child-friendly services advertised through the school. We have three governor positions on the school board. There are growing links too with the primary schools in Burley and Sopley.

We also hold a weekly Fareshare community food larder fighting food waste and helping those in hardship. This is hosted from St Mary's, using the car park and church hall.



Christ-Centered Fellowship



Our Team

We are greatly blessed with a wonderful and gifted team including two non-stipendiary curates, one retired priest with permission to officiate and three licensed lay ministers, who all generously give of their time and talents to support churches across the benefice, supported by our churchwardens and other lay volunteers in each parish.

House for Duty post

Burley

Benefice Administrator

Tristan Mason-Smith

Churchwardens

James Tazzyman, Oliver Rundell
Bransgore & Thorney Hill

Anita Simpson, Roger Hutchings
Burley

David Willrich
Hinton Admiral

Dave Lay, Liz Bishop
Sopley



Rev. Ian Dighé
Curate



Rev. Mo Pimenta
Curate



Rev. Philip McAvoy
PTO



Pat Simpson
LLM



Jan Farrow
LLM



Dan Sanderson
LLM

Our Organisation

Governance

The New Forest Edge Benefice was formed in 2023 incorporating the parishes of Bransgore, Burley, Hinton Admiral and Sopley.

Each parish is governed by its own PCC. We have active wardens, treasurers, secretaries and safeguarding officers, reflecting the generosity of our church members in taking on significant responsibilities. All Saints Thorney Hill is a chapel of ease and has representation on Bransgore PCC.

As a result of a recent Growing Rural Parishes Programme grant, we have been able to recruit a new administrator to work for the whole benefice to bring together critical administrative services and update communications under up-to-date IT systems. This includes work on a new website. As part of the grant, we also have funding available to enhance our youth work.

We are also actively considering our governance structure and are undertaking consultations with input from experienced practitioners to look at various options for reorganisation which will allow administrative streamlining without jeopardising the voice and unique identity of each individual congregation.



Our Organisation

Finance

Financial challenges are part of life for most parishes and we're no exception. We do have excellent finance teams of highly experienced laypeople, assisted by some professional help, all working hard to honour God's provision and steward it well. The four parishes currently operate their finances separately under the control of their respective PCCs.

It is a matter of regret that we have not been able to pay our collective CMF request in full for the last four years. In 2024 the four parishes paid £86,994, representing 57% of the CMF request, and contributions are likely to be in the same order in 2025. We are challenged to live out the joy of giving in response to God's love for us across our benefice in a meaningful way, highlighting the pressing need for a fresh approach to giving and stewardship.

Many parishes, and particularly Burley, who pay 100% of their individual CMF, have reserves, but significant proportions of these are restricted as to their use. Each church takes responsibility for their own finances with detailed quarterly reports to the church committees. We are committed to the Parish Giving Scheme.



Our Five Churches

St Mary's Bransgore is a church shaped by the need to reach out to the community around them with the Gospel of Christ, building upon thriving children's work and underpinned by faithful Bible teaching.



St John's Burley is committed to its growing links with all generations in the village, especially the local primary school, children's work in the church, and evangelistic outreach opportunities.



St Michael's Hinton aims to further develop its focus on traditional worship from the Book of Common Prayer and its growing choral tradition.



St Michael's Sopley has grown substantially over the past two years, both numerically and spiritually, whilst still enjoying a substantial wedding ministry.



All Saints Thorney Hill enjoys traditional services in a beautiful building but we aim to increasingly serve the needs of the local Traveller community.



St Mary the Virgin

Bransgore

St Mary the Virgin Church is located in the lovely village of Bransgore on the edge of the New Forest. St Mary's is a lively and friendly church that meets to celebrate and rejoice in the Word of God.

St Mary's has an average weekly congregation of approximately 60 people with a range of different ages: from the eight-month-old to the eighty-year-old. The church has fifteen to twenty children in attendance on average, and families are a key ministry in our church. Apart from our monthly all-age service, we run two Sunday school groups every week with fantastic leaders providing faithful and engaging teaching from the Bible. After each service, we have an important time of fellowship over coffee and cake and our fellowship regularly extends beyond the time limitations of church services, with various social activities for us to come together as a church family.

Our current service is a mixture of modern and traditional, with a band (guitar, piano and cajon) and the organ dividing the music between them. Our church is very much at the heart of the community for the significant services such as Easter Sunday, Remembrance Day, Christingle, Nativity and Nine Lessons and Carols, with many of these occasions being standing room only.

At St Mary's, the two churchwardens have taken responsibility for coordinating the Sunday morning services during the interregnum with most of the leading and preaching coming from within the congregation. We have been extremely encouraged by the way people have stepped up to serve in this period.

The church is affiliated with the local Church of England primary school, which is next to the church, and we have good links with Bransgore Community Church.



St John the Baptist Burley

We are a vibrant worshipping community, with a curate, two LLMs and a choir, offering a range of service styles which reflect the diversity of our congregation. We also have a small growing ministry to young couples and families.

Regular, evangelistic activities include one-off talks, Bible study groups, Hope Explored and Christianity Explored courses and 'The Bereavement Journey'. We also host a 'food for thought' luncheon.

We have numerous village connections, including a gentle exercise group, foot clinic, craft group, coffee mornings and links to the local primary school. We also offer addiction support.

Our Mission Statement is 'All for Christ & Christ for All'.

The church was built in 1838, the land being given by Sir John Lefevre, Lord of the Manor of Burley. In 2009 the St Mary Magdelene Chapel was added for smaller services, private prayer and reflection. Both are in excellent condition and state of repair.



St Michael and All Angels

Hinton Admiral

Is a very traditional Victorian village church with roots going back into the 12th century. The church today was completed in 1873, and has a unique reredos made of Portland stone, donated by the Meyrick family.

The wonderful Hill and Sons organ has just been fully restored much to the delight of the congregation. The average Sunday attendance is 25 at our traditional BCP sung Eucharist or Matins (due to clergy availability) service every Sunday at 9:00am.

Fundraising is always at the forefront of our minds. The church is uniquely placed, at the heart of the Hinton Admiral Estate, to collaborate with the current Sir George and Lady Meyrick in major fundraising activities.

For example, through garden openings at Hinton Admiral, or via their nearby wellbeing hub and events field. The church is in a position to become a key part of 'Harmony', the King's Foundation's vision of balance and interconnectedness, which the Estate has joined, becoming a 'living lab' for promoting the King's vision. The Meyricks are also enthusiastic about supporting the pioneering idea of a 'forest church' in their nearby woodland.

Our church has a choir of nine, a bell ringing team and an active friends and social committee that strengthens our fellowship amongst the congregation and wider community.

Given that the congregation at Hinton are not, in the majority "of the parish" and that very few people living in the parish attend this church, St Michael's church life and culture is more reflective of those who worship there. Worship, love of God and each other, support, comradeship and social togetherness are present in abundance among a dynamic group of mature adults who support the wider mission of the benefice.



St Michael and All Angels

Sopley

St. Michael and All Angels is a Grade II* listed church in the village of Sopley, founded in the 11th century.

Sopley Church has a congregation that is growing numerically and spiritually. The weekly community outreach, Fareshare, which was set up by Rev. Mo Pimenta, has been a real harvest field. We have recently had Bishop Rhiannon come to us for 5 confirmations, and at the same time, had 2 baptisms and one reaffirmation of baptismal vows.

The church is looked after pastorally and led by the curate, Rev. Mo Pimenta. We now have a small number of families with young children and we are working on accommodating them further into the life of the church beyond the children's talks we have already started.

This beautiful church hosts many weddings and baptisms as part of its ministry. We are fortunate to have a very skilled organist and an excellent pipe organ.

There is a thriving band of bell ringers, who meet weekly at practices which alternate between Sopley and Hinton, and ring both for Sunday services and weddings. The work of our flower ladies is much admired and enhances the church. The "Friends of Sopley church" is a separate charity which actively raises funds for the upkeep of the church fabric.



All Saints

Thorney Hill

The beautiful church of All Saints, Thorney Hill has been described as a "Jewel of the New Forest".

It was built in 1906 in the memory of Christine Manners who died in India at the age of 17. One of the key features of the church is the stunning mural, which was completed in 1922 by Phoebe Traquair.

All Saints is an intimate church. The services are taken by a member of the clergy or a LLM. All Saints follows the tradition of the Book of Common Prayer, with a service of sung Matins or the Eucharist, accompanied by an organ.

Occasional musical events are held throughout the year, which help with the upkeep of the church, and our candlelight carol service always fills the church to capacity.



The Current Benefice Service Pattern

Each of our churches has a service every Sunday across the benefice, except on the fifth Sunday of the month when we join together for a joint benefice service. At present, services are being led by a mixture of the ordained and lay licensed ministry team, alongside a team of lay volunteers, including several of the churchwardens.

Church	Time	Service Lead	Service Pattern
St Mary the Virgin Bransgore	10:30	Curate and ministry team of lay volunteers	Week 1: All Age Service Week 2: Holy Communion Week 3 & 4: Service of the Word
St John the Baptist Burley	10:30	Curate and LLM's	Week 1: Eucharist Week 2: Service of the Word Week 3: Informal Communion Week 4: All Age Service
	16:00	LLM	Week 4: Celtic Reflective Service
St Michael and All Angels Hinton Admiral	9:00	Curate and LLM's	Week 1: Holy Communion/Matins Week 2: Holy Communion/Matins Week 3: Holy Communion Week 4: Holy Communion/Matins
St Michael's and All Angels Sopley	11:00	Curate	Week 1: Service of the Word Week 2: Holy Communion Week 3: Service of the Word Week 4: Holy Communion
All Saints Thorney Hill	9:00	Curate and LLM's	Week 1: Holy Communion Week 2: Matins Week 3: Matins Week 4: Matins

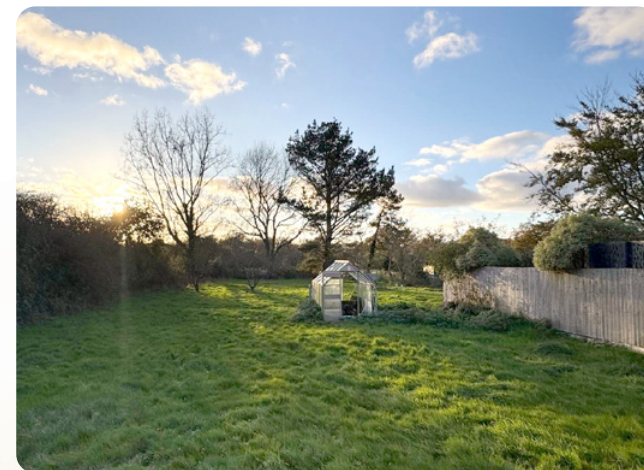
The Vicarage

The vicarage is a four-bedroom detached home in the sought-after village of Bransgore, a very short walk from St Mary's and the well-respected local primary school, and next to an award-winning thatched pub.

It has a spacious living room, a separate dining area, a large kitchen, and a study and has recently had a new roof installed, as well as a replacement to the boiler and double glazing downstairs. Work to replace the kitchen along with various other improvements has already started. The house also includes a garage and a generous garden, providing excellent outdoor space.

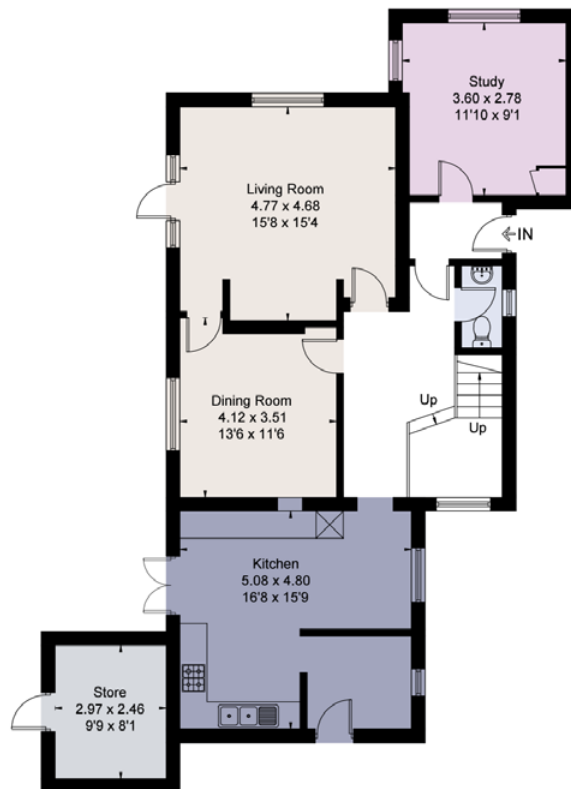
The closest beaches are a 10 minute drive away, with varied, gorgeous and interesting historical coastline extending away in both directions. The vicarage is also on the doorstep of the New Forest National Park, which covers 219 square miles of ancient woodland and open heathland, famous for its free-roaming ponies and charming villages.

The neighbourhood offers a strong community feel and convenient access to the surrounding countryside, while being close to Christchurch and transport links for wider travel. Between the sea and the New Forest, this peaceful area supports an outdoor lifestyle with many activities available from cycling trails and water sports to beach saunas and cream teas.

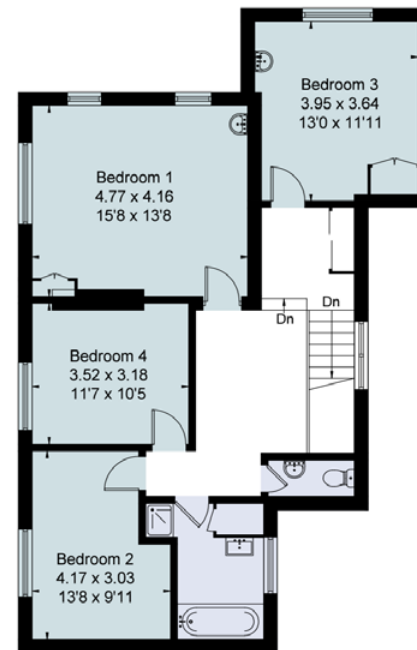


The Vicarage

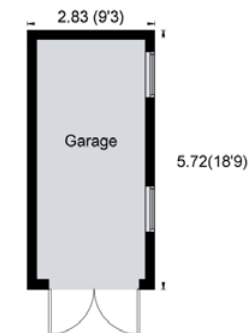
Approximate Floor Area = 183.4 sq m / 1974 sq ft
 External Store = 7.3 sq m / 78 sq ft
 Garage = 12.7 sq m / 137 sq ft
 Total = 203.4 sq m / 2189 sq ft



Ground Floor



First Floor



(Not Shown In Actual Location / Orientation)



This floor plan has been drawn in accordance with RICS Property Measurement 2nd edition.
 All measurements, including the floor area, are approximate and for illustrative purposes only. @fourwalls-group.com #84869

St Mary's Vicarage, Bransgore, BH23 8JH

Person Specification

Diocese of Winchester “Walking The Wessex Way”

1. Details of Post

<i>Role Title:</i>	Vicar
<i>Name of benefice:</i>	New Forest Edge
<i>Deanery:</i>	Christchurch
<i>Archdeaconry:</i>	Bournemouth

Key contacts

Generic

The Clergy, Church Wardens and PCC’s of the Benefice of New Forest Edge.
The Deanery Chapter and Synod.
The Staff at Old Alresford Place.

Specific

Head teachers of the local schools within the Benefice.
Clergy and parishes within Christchurch Deanery.

Supportive

Lay Chair:	Mrs Susan Lyontte
Area Dean:	Revd Canon Michael Smith
Assistant Area Deans:	Revd Stephen Miles and Revd Kathy Hicken
The Archdeacon:	The Venerable Jean Burgess
The Suffragan Bishop:	The Rt Revd Rhiannon King, Bishop of Southampton

2. Role Context: An Introduction from Bishop Philip.

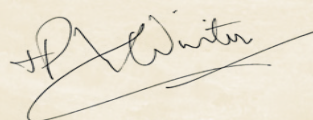
I’m delighted to be able to set the Role description for this benefice in our wider diocesan context.

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 too, especially in our large urban conurbations where our churches are supporting some of the diocese’s poorest communities.

In every context, we are committed to the 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.

Whilst not being ignorant of the challenges, 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 consider this ministry opportunity.



Person Specification

Diocese of Winchester “Walking The Wessex Way”

General

- i. To exercise the cure of souls shared with the bishop in this parish in collaboration with your colleagues.
- ii. To have regard to the calling and responsibilities of the clergy as described in the Canons, the Ordinal, the Code of Professional Conduct for the Clergy, and other relevant legislation.
- iii. To work to advance the Kingdom of God through servant leadership, collaboration and example, and with regard to the current diocesan mission vision and values.

a) **Serving** - Our diocese has played a major role in shaping this nation, and the life of the diocese is still marked by loving service, in innumerable ways, reaching out in love to those on the margins, serving the wider community, the nation and the wider world.

b) **Learning** - Our diocese has been a major engine of Christian learning and education, from the time of King Alfred onwards, and remains a centre of education, learning and discipleship, through its universities and colleges, through its schools and churches.


c) **Growing** - Our diocese has been a huge catalyst for church growth and mission. Today, we are still working for the revitalisation and renewal of our churches, equipping and enabling them for the challenges of this generation and beyond, nationally and internationally.

d) **Loving** - Our diocese has emanated love that has changed our communities and the wider world. Today, as people encounter our churches, schools and chaplaincies, they find themselves brought face to face with the love of God in Christ, and find their lives changed as a consequence.

Specific

Working within the Benefice of New Forest Edge:

1. To support and collaborate alongside the Benefice team both lay and ordained in the development of a new strategic vision for the Benefice of New Forest Edge.
2. To model collaborative leadership being both a team leader and player across the team.
3. To encourage, equip and train up leaders both lay and ordained for the growth of the church.
4. To establish and promote discipleship within the congregations, enabling deeper personal and corporate growth.
5. Exhibits and proactively encourages discipleship of church members, in the giving of their time, talents and money
6. Develop the commitment within the Benefice working with schools and committed to further develop our relationships with young people beyond school.
7. To work with the existing congregation in a way that is appreciative of the diversity of tradition but also enables change and revitalisation for future generations.
8. To enable good pastoral care within the Benefice in collaboration with the pastoral teams.
9. To work collaboratively with other parishes in the deanery and wider community of the church within the area.



*We exist to honour Jesus Christ, who did not
come to be served, but to serve, and to give
his life as a ransom for many.*

Mark 10:45

Diocesan Office, Telephone
01962 737310

Website
www.winchester.anglican.org

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www.facebook.com/CofEWinchester