

# Wotton and Holmbury St Mary: SUMMARY

January 2024

Since January 2015, the two parishes have been part of the Leith Hill United Benefice, together with the parishes of Abinger and Coldharbour. Ministerial support in the two parishes is principally provided by an Associate Minister appointed by the Incumbent, Kia Pakenham. The Benefice falls within the Dorking Area deanery in Guildford diocese. Each parish has its own PCC. Although the two rural Parishes of Wotton and Holmbury St Mary do not touch geographically, there is mutual support between them for activities such as the Wotton Fete, the Village Quiz and occasional joint services, such as Evensong. There is also close collaboration between the two churches over matters of finance and administration. Martha Golden, our Lay Reader, Hugh Skeil and PTO Virginia Smith are licensed to and actively involved with the work of both parishes.



## Wotton

St John's church was built over a thousand years ago and is beautifully situated beneath the line of the North Downs, close to the Pilgrim's Way. Congregations for regular services average between 10 and 20, slightly lower than about 10 years ago but the same as a hundred years ago, reflecting the stable characteristics of the rural village community, which has a population of approximately 300. Sunday services include BCP Matins on the first Sunday and Holy Communion (using Common Worship) on the other regular Sundays. The age profile of the congregation tends towards those who are retired, although others who visit on an ad hoc basis and couples who are married here often return to share in worship and form a lively and supportive group who also participate in the wider activities organized by St John's, including the Wotton Fete. St John's is a wonderfully friendly and welcoming church community.





## Holmbury St Mary

The village (now with a population of just under 600) was established in 1879, with the consecration of the church, which was built by G E Street. Parish Communion, using Common Worship, is offered on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays of each month and Morning Prayer on the 3<sup>rd</sup>. Worship is supported by a choir and a team of organists. On first Sundays, a said communion service is followed by a lively all-age 'Funday' worship, an informal act of worship based on Messy Church principles.

**Average Sunday attendance in 2023 was 24 adults and 2 children - a decrease in the total of 12% compared with 2022.** Whilst congregations at our traditional services are declining slowly, we are welcoming sustained numbers (25-35 adults, 5-15 children) at Funday.

Other successful outreach initiatives include Fourth Tuesday, a fellowship group for retired folk, launched several years ago, and a community hub for the village in the Church Room, with a community Café, starting in April 2018 with a repair cafe launched more recently. The commitment to the repair cafe & recycling facilities for the village, within the church, reflects the church's and the wider communities concern for the environment and their desire to make a difference.



## **NEEDS FOR ORDAINED MINISTRY SUPPORT AND LEADERSHIP**

**Our vision for the future is for a church with God at the centre, that welcomes everyone and attracts people to worship, fellowship and discipleship.**

We would like a 'real' person, with a heart in heaven but feet firmly in the mud of the Surrey Hills.

We are looking for a leader:

- Who loves God, and loves to share their faith with both churchgoers and the wider community;
- Able to befriend people from all backgrounds, naturally encouraging them to flourish spiritually;
- Who has an enthusiasm and flair for welcoming and communicating with children and their families;
- Who can draw out, develop and blend our gifts and theirs to build God's Kingdom.
- Who can help us to develop further and implement our plans for church growth in our parishes.

## **ASSOCIATE MINISTER ROLE DESCRIPTION**

1. He or she will be responsible to the Incumbent of the Benefice. Guided by and working alongside the Incumbent, as Associate Minister they will play a key part in the leadership of ministry and mission in the Leith Hill Benefice.
2. They will work collaboratively with the ministry team and the PCCs in the growth and development of the Benefice.
3. Working alongside the Incumbent and in consultation with PCCs they will assist in the provision of worship and pastoral care within the Benefice. Initially this will be mainly, but not exclusively, in the parishes of Holmbury and Wotton.
4. They will provide leadership to empower the church communities in their spiritual development, significantly in: planning for the future, encouraging and welcoming new members, prayer, pastoral visiting, personal spiritual growth, sharing the Good News, stewardship of time and resources, and growth in fellowship.
5. This is a House for Duty post. They will live in the parsonage house (see below) in Holmbury.
6. They will work 2 days [or equivalent] plus a Sunday each week.
7. When available, they will attend Deanery Chapter in order to receive and offer support to the wider team.

They will be entitled to 4 clear weeks a year plus a week after Christmas and a week after Easter. A further 2 Sundays can be taken off. Time taken for an annual retreat is not included in the holiday allowance.

