



APPLICATION PACK

Priest in Charge - Holy Trinity, Abbots Leigh and St Mary the Virgin,
Leigh Woods and Chaplain to the Cote House Charity

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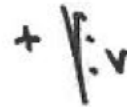


FROM THE BISHOP

The City of Bristol is often characterised by the images of Brunel's Clifton Suspension Bridge and the balloons of the Fiesta massing on the skyline. Solid engineering skill and entrepreneurial and sometimes risky new ventures do capture something of the feel of the city at this stage of its history. The parishes of Abbots Leigh and Leigh Woods have solid and long standing Christian foundations. The Somerset farmstead of Leigh supported the Abbey of Bristol which became the cathedral under Henry VIII. The hymn tune composed by the musician and pastor Cyril Taylor just after the bombing of the city carries the name Abbots Leigh across the world. Across the river the charities on Cote Lane have their origins in the desire of Lady Monica Wills, in the early 20th century, to support retired female missionaries and church workers to live in Christian community. The charities remain at the forefront of developing care and community for those who are frail and elderly.

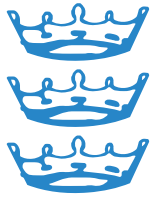
Now, in the context of a city which is deeply secular, the parish and the Cote Charity are looking towards a new calling both to the villages of Abbots Leigh and Leigh Woods and the villages of Katherine and Griffiths House. The parish is working within the Diocesan vision of Transforming Church. Together to build on the recent leadership provided by an interim Curate in Charge. There is renewed energy for change and growth, for mission and evangelism. There is support for this newly shaped role which includes the rewards and demands of chaplaincy amongst our elders.

The Diocese of Bristol is committed to supporting the wellbeing of its clergy in a context where Christians, including clergy, have to establish the credibility of the church by being profoundly shaped by Christ himself, who came to serve, not to be served. We are committed to supporting clergy in the task of building communities which are following Jesus, serving others and transforming communities and this innovative post is an opportunity to be at the heart of this new, and occasionally risky venture. If you are open to that challenge we look forward very much to hearing from you.



Rt Revd Vivienne Faul
Bishop of Bristol





THE DIOCESE OF BRISTOL

HUMANITY RECONCILED CREATION RESTORED

The Diocese of Bristol is presided over by the Bishop of Bristol, The Right Reverend Vivienne Faull. The Bishop of Bristol is supported by the Suffragan Bishop of Swindon, the Right Reverend Neil Warwick. The Venerable Christopher Bryan is the Archdeacon of Malmesbury and the Reverend Becky Waring is the Archdeacon of Bristol. The Reverend Adam Beaumont is the Associate Archdeacon.

Transforming Church. Together (TCT) its vision: Humanity Reconciled, Creation Restored. It began in 2021 with an extended period of listening to God and to one another. People from across the Diocese joined in conversations and online questionnaires to share experiences of faith, society and the church, and to discuss hopes for the future. From these conversations, four guiding values were discerned: Creativity, Openness, Bravery and Generosity.

Those values inspired a vision and strategy which seeks transformation across the whole Diocese by the grace of

God. Each Deanery and Benefice is encouraged to work out what TCT means in their particular context – the same principles can inspire and develop mission in very different ways. With major financial support from the national church, the Diocese is offering support and resources in key priority areas of ministry. These include:

- Enabling parishes to discern vision and implement plans
- Help for benefices with evangelism, discipleship plans and resources
- Training, coaching and support for teams setting up and running Fresh Expressions
- Support for ministerial wellbeing and vocation. Each incumbent will receive bimonthly coaching sessions, with additional support for those new to their post.
- Enhanced provision for volunteer training and administering safeguarding

- Increased capacity in the Diocesan office to support parishes with the care and improvement of church buildings
- Investing to become a Net Zero Diocese by 2030
- Overcoming barriers to faith by addressing the church's history on racial justice and diversity
- Developing partnerships between the church at various levels and local councils, businesses etc
- Investment in work with under 18s through school chaplaincy, youth interns and workers
- Investment in deprived parishes, church plants/grfts and new Mission Areas

This is a huge, exciting, and sometimes frightening vision, which we can only attempt in the strength Jesus supplies through his Spirit.

Diocesan Support Service

The Diocesan Support Services exist to support the mission of the church. Based at the Diocesan Office to the north of Bristol and made up of 50 employees and volunteers, the DSS serve ministers, parishes and schools by expressing vision, strengthening relationships, empowering people, maximizing resources and developing structures. We offer training, consultancy, advice in a range of areas, highlight and share best practice across the Diocese and manage different aspects of the life of the Diocese.



FROM THE AREA DEAN

Welcome from the Deanery of Bristol West!

Thank you for considering joining us in the Deanery of Bristol West and considering the role of Priest in Charge for Abbots Leigh and Leigh Woods and Chaplain to the Cote Charity.

This is a significant role in many ways. As you will read in the profile there are a number of features that increase this significance. Whilst the Abbots Leigh and Leigh Woods parish resident community is relatively small the opportunities because of location and context are exciting. Additionally, the Cote Charity chaplaincy role and the connections that go with this are important both pastorally and in terms of networks.

The Deanery of Bristol West covers a large area, from Avonmouth in the Southwest to Alveston in the North, stretching across from Clifton to the Severn Estuary, and all places in between. We represent parishes and churches from diverse socio-economic contexts, and a wide breadth of Church of England traditions. The Deanery contains the Avonside Mission Area (ASMA), and the United Benefice of Abbots Leigh and Leigh Woods lies just across the river Avon within North Somerset.

Chapter meets monthly and includes our SSOM and PTO colleagues. It is a supportive and encouraging group of people. We also arrange events that can be attended by our LLM colleagues. We look forward to welcoming the new incumbent to the Deanery and to our regular Chapter meetings - where lunch is shared and enjoyed, and topics discussed.

We hope you will feel enthused and inspired by all that is happening here in the Benefice and at Katherine and Griffiths House, the residential home and specialist dementia unit operated

by the Cote Charity, and the exciting potential and opportunities that this Diocese has in the immediate future. These opportunities align with the Diocesan 'Transforming Church. Together' strategy which invests in the way we work together; reimagining the way we form collaborative relationships which bring more people to Christ and more sustainable social change. We pray that, as you consider this Benefice and Cote House, this Deanery and Diocese, you will discern God's calling for your ministry.

Charles Sutton,
Area Dean of Bristol West





INTRODUCTION TO THE BENEFICE

Welcome to the United Benefice of Abbots Leigh (population c.800) with Leigh Woods (population c.700), in North Somerset on the western side of the river Avon close to the City of Bristol.

The benefice consists of two communities, Abbots Leigh and Leigh Woods, some 1.5 miles apart. It has two churches, Holy Trinity in Abbots Leigh and St. Mary the Virgin in Leigh Woods and services are rotated between the two. The parish is considered to be semi-rural, a designated Green Belt area with ancient woodland, containing a Site of Special Scientific Interest, historic parks and gardens and nature conservation areas. The A369 links Abbots Leigh and Leigh Woods to the vibrant city of Bristol and provides direct access to the M5 motorway network.

Bristol is just across the historic Clifton Suspension Bridge, so its major cultural and other attractions are easily accessed by car and bicycle and on foot. These include the Old Vic, Hippodrome and Tobacco Factory theatre; Bristol Beacon, St George's and other live music venues; museums like We the Curious, M Shed, the City Museum, and the RWA; wider resources like Watershed, Arnolfini and

Bristol Folk House; and the two universities and City of Bristol College. The united benefice also contains two large secondary schools.

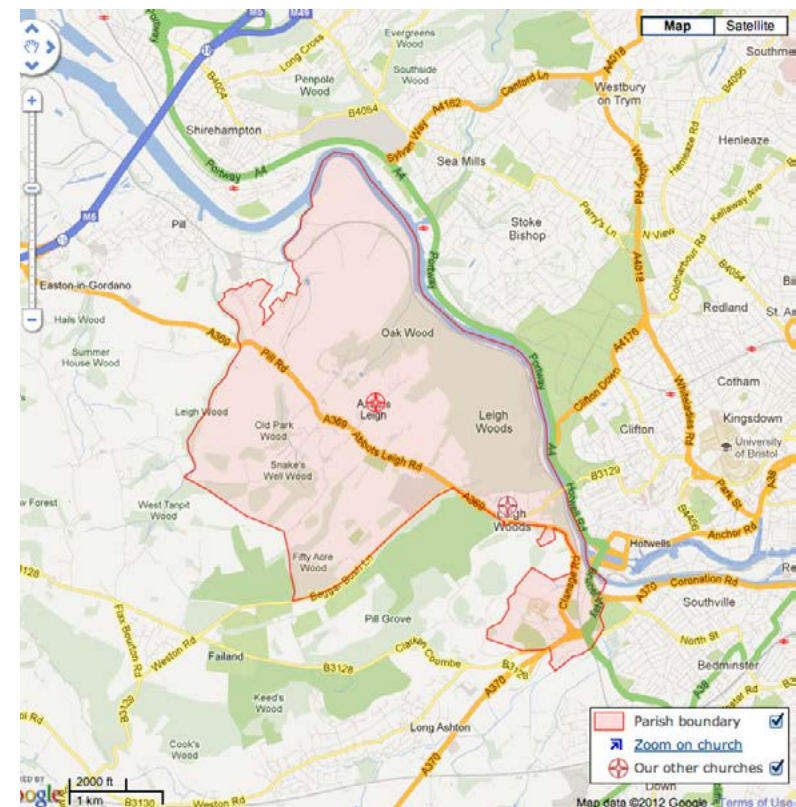
The role of Priest in Charge is split between two functions; Priest in Charge of the United Benefice (0.5) and also Chaplain to Cote House (0.3).

We are looking for a candidate who:

1. appreciates, or is willing to learn, how the work of village churches embraces and engages with the whole community
2. has strong personal faith which allows them to deliver clear teaching to everyone, whatever their stage on their Christian journey
3. has a passion for pastoral and mission work, particularly with families, young people and schools
4. will build upon existing activities to broaden the reach of our regular worship and additional activities
5. will provide chaplaincy support to the residents and staff of the Cote Charity's Katherine and Griffiths House and engage with the life of these three locations

VICARAGE

The diocese is in the process of selling the current vicarage and buying another one in the same area which is better designed for modern living and more closely meets our declared Net Zero target. This is likely to include the addition of appropriate energy saving technology.



THE OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN THE BENEFICE

At first glance the Benefice is semi-rural with a relatively low population. However, this overlooks the very significant opportunities for growth to the benefit of the two communities but also more widely within Bristol and across the Diocese.

A Place of Influence. The nearness to Bristol, combined with a semi-rural feel and being 'across the river' makes Abbots Leigh and Leigh Woods a desirable location for professionals, businesspersons and those who have wider community influence. This has been a feature of both settlements since the construction of the Suspension Bridge (1864) and the initial high value sale of land for development. A significant proportion of the residents of AL&LW have 'voice and influence' within the city and further afield.

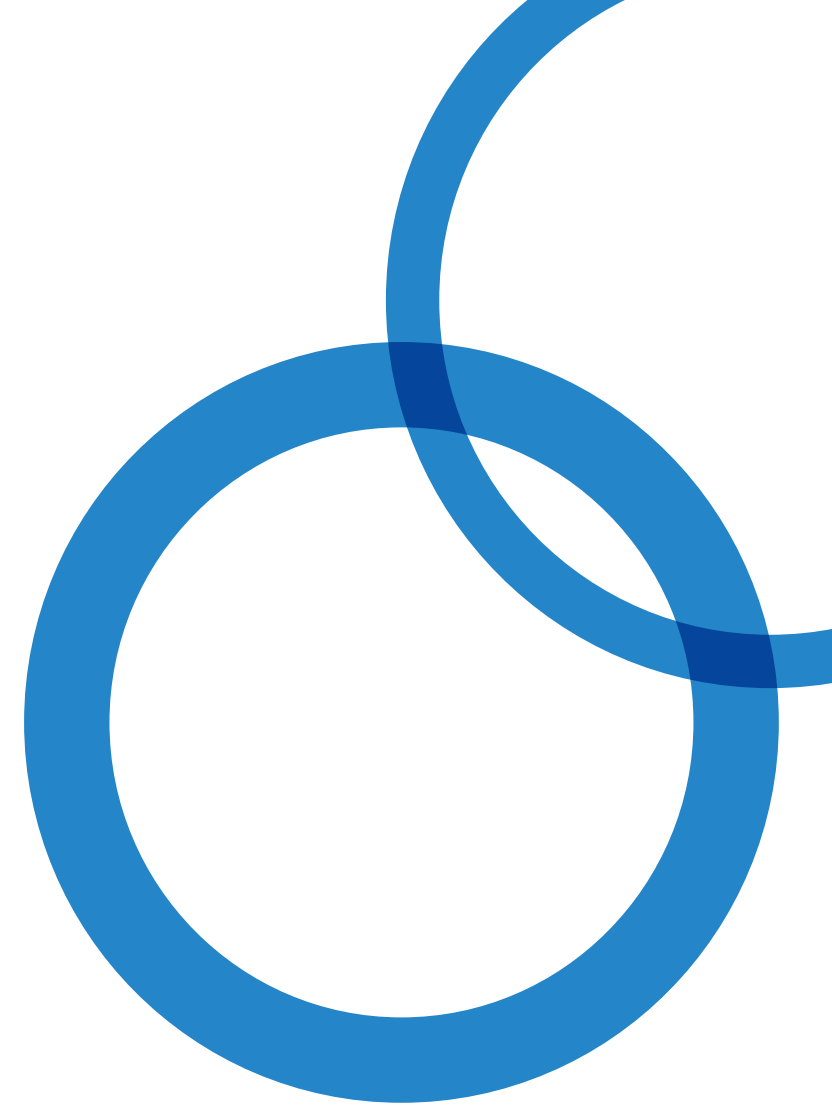
A Place of Generosity. Bristol West is the major Diocesan contributor of Parish Share. The relative proportion offered by AL&LW is relatively low. The average household income is much higher than the national average, as is the net worth of residents. There is opportunity to develop the broad generosity of these two communities.

A Diocesan Resource. This community, and in particular St Mary's in Leigh Woods, combines a readily usable resource (with adaptable church buildings and kitchens), with easy access to the city, the attraction of the 'rural idyll' and the National Trust 'Wilderness of Tranquility'. This opportunity is taken by some parishes and worshipping communities for Awaydays; a number of city events and also charities (such as Bridges for Communities) make use of the quite remarkable facilities. This is a very real opportunity and in keeping with the Transforming Church. Together strategy to increase relevance and build partnerships. At the moment this feature is little recognised beyond the parish and very much underused.



A Place of Learning. We are pleased to have two Secondary Comprehensive schools (one being part of the Bristol Cathedral Schools Trust) and a campus belonging to the University of the West of England. All told, in excess of 3,000 pupils and students are engaged in learning within these two parishes. Whilst students are mostly drawn from other parts of Bristol and further afield, the opportunity for missional engagement is considerable.

- **Ashton Park School and Sixth Form** Comprehensive school with one thousand two hundred and forty pupils. It is part of the Excalibur Multi Academy Trust. It is strong in sports and vocational preparation.
- **St Katherine's School** in Pill, within Abbots Leigh parish, is a fully inclusive comprehensive school that values every young person within the community. It is part of the Cathedral Schools Trust (CST) with approximately one thousand pupils and is in a semi-rural location.
- **Bower Ashton, City Campus UWE.** For students studying creative disciplines, in particular: film studies, and the site is equipped with film studios; fashion, with on-site fashion workshops; and fabrication with on-site fabrication suites and design studios – also library, lounge and café. City Campus is the 'Hub' for Arnolfini, Spike Island and the Watershed.



*“We have SO missed having a vicar!
We long for someone to teach,
shepherd, lead us and to bring us
together as a community”*

INTRODUCTION TO COTE HOUSE CHAPLAINCY

In 1968 the Bristol Society of Merchant Venturers (SMV) was appointed Trustee for the Cote Charity, bringing to the organisation their vast experience and resources in providing care for older people. SMV continues to play a hands-on role in the governance and strategic development of the Cote Charity today. In order to provide high quality, purpose-built accommodation for older people, Katherine House was opened in the grounds of Cote House in 2009, with Griffiths House following in 2016 as a sister home dedicated to providing high quality dementia care. The work undertaken by the Cote Charity is also supported by the 'Grateful Society' which provides valuable resources and funds, enhancing the care provided to our residents. SMV has a separate almshouse charity which is administered by its Care for Older People Committee, which also oversees the Cote Charity, and is managed by the Cote Charity team.

There are two elements to the Cote Charity: Katherine and Griffiths House.

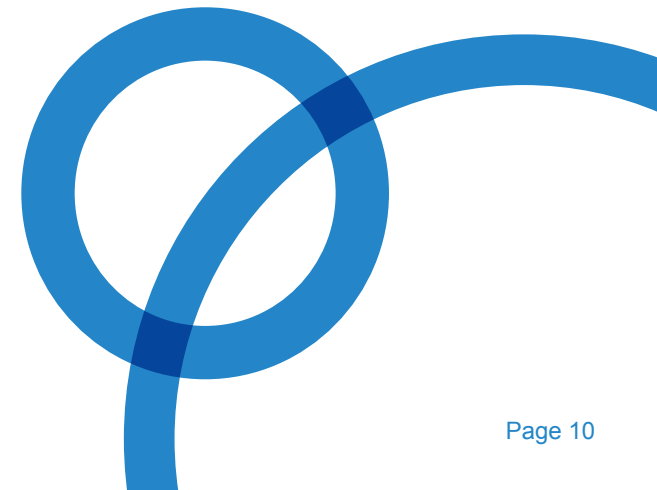
Tucked into a peaceful, landscaped setting, Katherine & Griffiths House are purpose-built residential homes that have been thoughtfully designed to maximise views, natural light and a sense of wellbeing for our residents.

In a tranquil location next to the Downs on the edge of Westbury-on-Trym, Katherine House provides 24-hour residential care for up

to 41 residents; and next door, Griffiths House provides round the clock specialist dementia care for up to eight residents.

SMV's involvement with Bristol's almshouses dates back over 300 years, when it became trustee of the Almshouses on St Michael's Hill, built in 1691. This Grade 1 listed building has been refurbished to provide sheltered accommodation for its residents in 12 comfortable flats with an onsite laundry, communal lounge, common room and chapel.

The role of the chaplain is to provide spiritual and emotional support to residents, and their families, and to Cote Charity Staff. The chaplain will offer comfort, compassion, and prayerful services. Also, as a listener, to provide a safe space for individuals to share their fears, joys, and hopes as they deal with the transitions of life. The chaplain may also be involved in support groups, meaningful social activities, and other services to help individuals and families in these stages of life.



VISION AND VALUES OF THE BENEFICE

Our Vision is “To know God and share his love with others”.

Our Values, in line with this Vision, are to be a Church:

1. in which people of all ages feel a strong sense of belonging, spiritual fulfillment, understanding and identity;
2. where there are opportunities for people to explore the Christian faith in a culture of openness, accessibility and mutual support;
3. with established rhythms of discipleship and where active faith flourishes;
4. where whole-life worship revitalizes the spiritual energy of the parish and people re-engage with our church community;
5. that is an outwardly-looking, missional church integral to the life of the community;
6. where family-focused expressions of our Faith are developed and sustained both within and beyond our services;
7. with places of worship where the spiritual energy of the parish is recognized and harnessed, and where people from both within and outside of the parish are galvanized into engagement with our church community through worship and planned giving;
8. that reaches out and by its outward looking attitude renders itself an integral part of the whole community in which it operates;
9. led by a ministry team whose members are able to make the Christian Faith both accessible and relevant to people of all ages and backgrounds, through powerful communication skills combined with an openness towards debate, change and transformation.



DEVELOPING THE MISSION AND STRATEGY

With our new incumbent in post, we would love to rework our strategy, so that our plans fit with the diocesan strategy, Transforming Church Together (TC.T) and are shaped by our own context.

The four main strategic outcomes of TC.T are:

- to have a form of church in every community in which all can participate, thrive and belong;
- to have people who worship God in every aspect of their lives, and throughout their whole lives;
- for the diocese to be recognized as a powerful force for gospel change;
- for the diocese to have sustainable finances.

These we intend to blend with our strategic intentions. Thus, our vision, and the vision of any new incumbent, might include the transformation of our church community to reach out to all, especially the young who are the future, both of the church and also of the community, and for whom the church must be relevant and be seen to be relevant. Ours should be a church for everyone and not just its members, and to be a lively community both of faith and of debate. We recognize, in society as a whole, a growing search for answers to questions of spirituality in the widest sense, of a sensitivity to issues of inequality, injustice and environmental

disaster. The Church can be and should be providing answers to those questions. Our aspiration should be to meet those questions with practical as well as theological answers.

The current Curate in Charge has distributed a survey to the parish in September 2024, the findings of which will be able to be used by the next incumbent to help with formalizing a future strategy.



“The church is a vital asset for the community. Thank you for consulting the village - very proactive and welcome. Although not a church goer myself, I fully appreciate and value your role in the village.”

SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS

We operate as one Parish with most worshippers attending both churches.

We have active and competent Churchwardens, a PCC which is talented, well organized and works well together as a team, a proactive safeguarding lead, two Deanery Synod reps and several Leadership Teams which take on day-to-day responsibilities. Our Parish Administrator is the first contact point for any enquiries for Baptisms, Banns and Weddings and plays a central and pivotal role in all church administration. Our church buildings are managed by our two DCCs, leaving the PCC to concentrate on other matters. The PCC meets every two months on the first Monday and the DCCs meet every two months within a week or two after PCC meetings.

We aim to ensure that our social activities support growth as well as supporting our communities.

We look to provide facilities in our buildings for the wider community and to raise additional revenue.

Within the United Parish we raise decent sums for the range of charities we support and contribute large quantities of food to the Bristol Northwest food bank at Avonmouth.

We have a Pastoral Care Team which provides visiting (including to the Abbots Leigh care home) and formal and informal welcoming to newcomers.

We have two pretty and well-maintained church buildings and a successful wedding ministry - in addition to catering for residents, both churches are also regarded locally as "wedding destinations".

We have an excellent interactive and well used Website and Facebook page.

We have enjoyable music, thanks to our Director of Music and (very small) choir.



WEAKNESSES

While solvent, our income has stood still in recent years, and we find it increasingly difficult to pay a demanding Parish Share.

Our worshipping congregation is diminishing and ageing.

Our United Parish is not diverse.

Family weddings, funerals and memorial services are extremely well attended and Remembrance Sunday and the major Christian festivals attract a reasonable crowd, congregations are otherwise small

This is an area where we are keen to see a change to revitalise the church community.

OPPORTUNITIES

Our two wonderfully situated communities are small, warm and friendly and respectful of the church community. A good range of social events are attended by residents and worshippers alike and the sense of community is enhanced by the well circulated and successful Link parish magazine. Our faith is at the heart of all we do.

The United Parish is wealthy and there are opportunities to grow our planned giving and to develop new income streams.

Many United Parish residents are successful business leaders or people of influence in the Bristol city region. There is therefore latent opportunity for the Church if it can harness this wealth of talent.

The United Parish is full of good people who are community minded but have lost connection with the Church. This is an ideal opportunity for mission and outreach to re-engage and enable a new connection between the church and the parish community.

THREATS

Leigh Woods residents have a strong sense of community and church and residents group work well together, but the place is to some degree a dormitory suburb of Bristol; Abbots Leigh has a number of community focuses (the Civic Society, Parish Council, pub and village hall) with which the church could work better, to the common benefit of all.



SERVICES AND STYLE OF WORSHIP

The tradition of the parish is broadly central. Services are based on Common Worship (CW).

There are four types of service which alternate between each church in a fairly set pattern. There is recognition that some people prefer a quieter and more traditional service. Children are welcomed to our Family Service worship. At Abbots Leigh the building does not lend itself to the children moving elsewhere for part of the service. We have found that the Family Services are attractive to people exploring the Christian faith.

The main Sunday service is at 10.30 a.m. and broadly follows a monthly rota of two Parish Communion (CW) and two family services, which are informal services of the Word. A 9.30 Family Worship would normally be followed by a 10.30 Communion Service. We have occasional 'All-Age' communion services which follow a shortened CW liturgy. A 6.30 p.m. Taize service may be held once a month on Sundays. This means that on a typical Sunday there will be one or two services.

Certain services, such as Easter, Christmas or Remembrance Day, are held at each church in alternate years. Christingle is always held at Leigh Woods because, having chairs not pews, the nave is more adaptable and has a greater capacity. A memorial service is held to commemorate All Souls Day and there is a well-attended carol service involving a choir and congregation. We aim to provide a variety of services which are comfortable for every

age, commensurate with the ministry and time available of the Incumbent. During the vacancy we have rationalized the services to take pressure off our visiting and temporary priests.

Each church can seat about 150 excluding the choir. Several members at each church are approved to aid the administration of communion, read the lessons and gospels, and devise and pray the intercessions. We have a very small choir, which pre-Covid always robed but now usually does not. The Parish Communion liturgy is sung in part to a setting composed by Christopher Walker, son of a late choir member. Flower arrangers decorate the churches especially for festivals, and a working party provides posies for the Mothering Sunday service.



THE NUMBERS - ATTENDANCE AND FINANCE

Ordinary weekly attendance	2019	2020	2021	2023
Holy Communion	7	6	9	-
Family Service	22	22	12	8
Parish Communion	24	23	15	16
Evensong	15	10	8	-
BCP 8am	-	6	9	-
Family Communion	-	-	-	17 + 2
Taize	-	13	12	10

Special Services	2019	2020	2021	2023
Baptisms	-	3	1	0
Weddings	-	2	2	1
Funerals	-	4	3	3
Crematorium	-	-	2	3
Good Friday	-	16	12	-
Ash Wednesday	-	18	-	-
Maundy Thursday	-	15	12	-
Easter Day	120	100	48	37
Mothering Sunday	-	34	20	25
Harvest	-	43	40	22
Rememberance	-	73	40	33
All Souls Service	-	34	35	29
Christmas Eve Christingle	180	180	57	97
Carol Service	-	84	53	81
Christmas Eve Midnight Communion	42	42	20	25
Christmas Day All Age Service	150	150	90	72

(5 weddings will have been held in 2022)

Festival services, services with baptism and Zoom attendance have not been included.

		2021	2022	2023	
		£	£	£	
REVENUE	Donations regular giving Gift Aid	54517	57898	60180	
	Transfer from Parish Funds	4000	8000	8000	
	Other income (legacy, magazine. Fundraising)	10526	11485	5838	
	Occasional services (net after fees paid to Diocese and organist)	4512	6841	4249	
	Total Income	73555	84224	78267	
COSTS	Parish Share to Diocese	47517	45834	35000	
	Other costs	30617	35653	37844	
	Total Expenditure	78134	81487	72844	
	Net deficit or surplus	-4579	2737	5423	
	United Parish Assets			16963 32391	Current Reserves @1.1.24

The Revenue and Costs in the preceding schedule relate only to the United Parish, covering as they do all costs except exceptional repair costs.

Each DCC maintains separate accounts which are not shown here but are available on request. The exceptional costs for St Mary's are covered by the income from Restricted Fund Investments.

Those for Holy Trinity are covered by special fundraising as Holy Trinity has few investments. Almost all the assets are dedicated to the two churches with the greatest majority for St Mary's. The Joint Parish, which pays all the running costs, has only small reserves, accumulated from revenue surpluses and exceptional donations.

The full Report and Accounts can be made available on request.

The Finances are run by our United Parish PCC Treasurer, Sian Narracott, who prepares budgets, establishes targets and prepares and monitors cash flow forecast. Sian is supported by the Parish Finance Group. This consists of the Treasurer, the Treasurers of the two constituent parish DCCs and two former PCC Treasurers. The group meets every two months, reports the financial position to the PCC and makes recommendations. The Parish Finance Group is responsible for cost control, using the National Procurement Initiative and forward planning. It monitors the Gift

“As the church and hall is the only community space in Leigh Woods I would love to see it opened up and used by a range of different groups (not necessarily faith based).”

Aid process and tax recovery and our insurances. Each year in collaboration with the incumbent it engages in a communication programme with parishioners to ensure that everyone is aware of the parish financial position and encouraged to play their part by increased regular giving. Only a very small proportion of regular giving is now provided by the envelope scheme. Over the last few years we have paid substantial sums to the Diocese by way of Parish Share and, with the exception of the current year, this rises in line with inflation.

Overall we believe that our finances are well managed, presented and monitored.



COMMUNITY LINKS

We look out for needs; we welcome the unfamiliar person; we share God's gifts and resources.

Our pastoral ministry is characterised by:

- Monthly service at Abbots Leigh Nursing Home (suspended through the pandemic but with a re-start under review)
- Visiting parishioners in hospital
- Pastoral team on hand for quiet talks at the All Souls Service

Social and regular outreach or mission events:

- We have recently started running an Alpha course in the local pub and invited the whole Parish to attend.
- Teatime Special, a monthly meeting with a speaker and tea and cake with time for a chat.
- Community Cinema
- Lent lunches in St Mary's vestry
- We provide to each household "The Link", a community magazine that reports on both church and secular activities
- Community teas for walkers from Leigh Woods

Historically, fund-raising activities to repair the fabric of Holy Trinity and the organ at St Mary's have been diverse, drawing upon talents in the wider community to put on very professional events. In the past, and among other events, we have held:

- A flower festival
- A series of plays by a local drama group with support from the DCC
- 'Surprise Meals' held in homes in the area
- Quiz Nights in the village hall
- Harvest Suppers
- A fashion show
- A jazz concert
- Art Exhibitions
- Grand Auction of Promises
- A music festival involving a range of music and high-quality performers was planned but had to be cancelled because of the pandemic. Such an event could be revived.

The wider community:

- We collect for the Bristol Northwest food bank at Avonmouth.
- Each year we hold a special coffee morning to raise funds and goods for the Caring in Bristol appeal.
- At harvest we now support the Food bank and at Christmas we support the Children's Society.

The Wider Area

THE DEANERY

The Bristol West Deanery led by Fr Charles Sutton, Area Dean.

THE DIOCESE

The Parish of Abbots Leigh with Leigh Woods is in the Diocese of Bristol which includes North Wiltshire and Swindon. Our diocese is led by Rt. Rev. Viv Faull (Bishop of Bristol), the Rt Rev. Neil Warwick (Bishop Suffragan of Swindon), the Ven Becky Waring (Archdeacon of Bristol) and the Ven Christopher Bryan (Archdeacon of Malmesbury).

We are enthusiastic and open minded, engaged with Deanery Synod and the wider Church (including Churches Together in Clifton, Cotham and Redland), and have great relationships with other churches within the Deanery and across the wider Diocese.

“A vicar would provide leadership, enthusiasm and engender commitment from parishioners.”



HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

ABBOTS LEIGH

Abbots Leigh is defined by its position on a ridge with glorious views in all directions particularly towards the Bristol Channel and the Welsh hills beyond. Holy Trinity's church tower dominates the ridge. The village history is well documented; its original Anglo-Saxon name 'Leigh' or 'Lega' is recorded in the Domesday Book and a church may have existed as early as 1042. The village's character and development has largely been defined by its ownership as part of a large agricultural estate, first by the church (1115-1551) to support the Abbey of St. Augustine (later becoming Bristol Cathedral) then in private hands until 1915. In 1852 Abbots Leigh became a parish in its own right. The village was released from its dependency on the Leigh Court estate when the 2,213 acres were sold at auction as several lots in 1915. Then Abbots Leigh evolved a new identity as a residential area for business and professional families and has continued to develop as an affluent residential commuter village for Bristol and further afield. Today, about 800 people reside in Abbots Leigh in predominantly detached houses, almost entirely privately owned. It is characterised by large prosperous houses next to modest ex-farmworkers' cottages clustered along the ridge, with many dwellings fairly spread out along the access routes to the old farmsteads. Approximately 24% of the population is under the age of 24, and 22% of pensionable age.

LEIGH WOODS

The history of Leigh Woods is much more recent than that of Abbots Leigh. When Brunel's Clifton Suspension Bridge was completed in 1864 there was only one house on the Leigh Woods side of the Avon Gorge. Land was acquired by the Leigh Woods Land Company and plots were sold off on which the wealthy could build houses costing not less than £650 and usually more! Several attempts were made by the residents to build their own church, as travel to the parish in Long Ashton nearly two miles away, on foot or by carriage, was not easy. Land was given by the Land Company and the church was completed and licensed in October 1892. A year later, St. Mary's, latterly St. Mary the Virgin, was consecrated with its own parish. Very little further building was undertaken in Leigh Woods until after 1950 when larger properties divided their land and the largest houses began to be split into flats. Ultimately five houses were demolished and replaced with custom-built blocks of flats. The number of properties is now a little over 250 of which more than half are flats. Leigh Woods remains a sought-after residential area and the National Trust and Forestry England woodlands a popular destination for Bristolian walkers and bicycle riders.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

QUALIFICATIONS

Essential

- An ordained priest within the Church of England or a Church in communion with it or a Church whose orders it recognises
- Satisfactory completion of Initial Ministerial Education Designated at selection or Candidates' Panel as Incumbent Status.
- Fully trained in and committed to safeguarding of all in the community and able to work in line with safeguarding policies
- DBS enhanced clearance

Desirable

- Further training that enhances the skills of community and / or missional leadership

EXPERIENCE

Essential

- Leading the church in setting and holding its vision
- Inspiring, motivating, challenging and empowering members of the Church individually, and collectively to achieve that vision
- Sharing ministry and working collaboratively with others, so that individual's gifts and talents are identified and used effectively in any given situation or task

- Comfortable leading worship in the Anglican tradition both traditional and contemporary
- Positive work with community groups and/or schools
- Commitment to collaboration in mission with a focus on new residential developments

Desirable

- Experience of doing forms of church in creative, engaging and imaginative ways
- Engaging with a variety of organizations, not necessarily church related, to find collaborative ways to support residents and visitors
- Good understanding of the significance of heritage and contested heritage as vehicles to develop social justice

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Essential

- The ability to make and build on links with individuals and community organisations whose involvement with the Church
- The ability to identify and respond to opportunities for mission
- Leading with integrity contemporary, creative worship

Desirable

- The ability to motivate and inspire, developing new ideas and initiatives to encourage worship and growth within the community

- The ability to support existing Christians in evangelism and discipleship so that members of the parish are encouraged to show God's love in action
- Good understanding of current racial justice, social action, inclusion and equality issues relevant to enabling a church to become a learning resource

GENERAL ATTRIBUTES

Essential

- A collaborative leader who is adaptable, approachable, people orientated, responsive and reliable
- Forward looking and interested in growing and promoting links between the church and its community particularly in encouraging connections with families, children, and teenagers

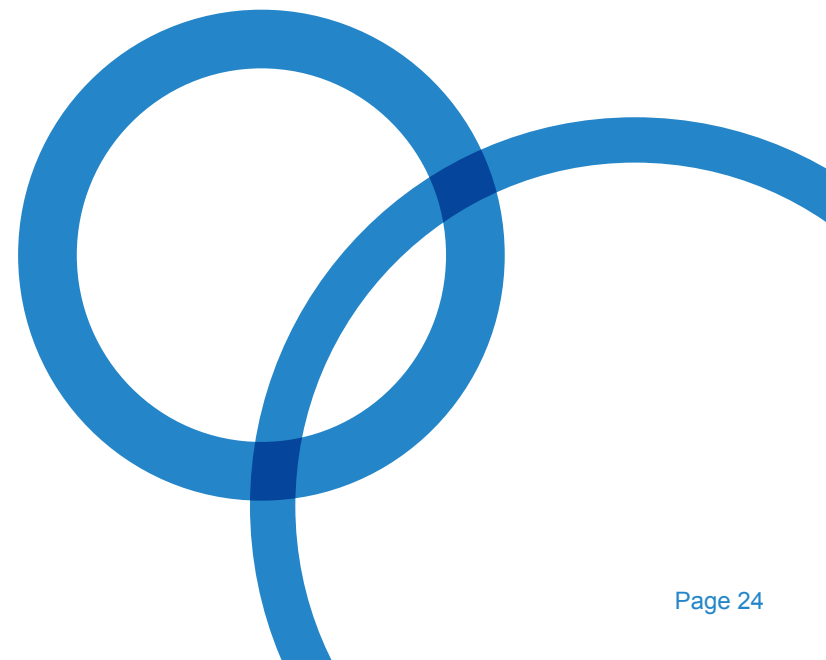
Desirable

- Enthusiasm for exploring opportunities for groups and individuals to develop their faith outside of gathered worship
- Making full use of opportunities for outreach and service to the community, collaborating where appropriate with other benefices and agencies, so that assistance is provided to the community as effectively as possible

OTHER

Essential

- Care and development of themselves and their personal relationships, including adequate time for family life, friendship, recreation, renewal and personal health, through taking weekly day off and their full holiday entitlement
- Able to manage priorities and boundaries
- Full participation in the emerging 'Transforming Church. Together' coaching and wellbeing programme



CONTACT

Interested to know more?

CONTACT

The Archdeacon of Bristol

Becky Waring

becky.waring@bristoldiocese.org

An application form and guidance notes can be downloaded from the diocesan website.

Applications should be submitted to jobs@bristoldiocese.org

