

# The Five Alive East Devon Mission Community

Profile

**St Peter's Church, Dalwood; St Giles's Church, Kilmington;  
St Michael's Church, Shute; St Michael & All Angels Church, Stockland;  
and St John the Baptist Church, Yarcombe**



East Devon  
Mission Community



# Contents...

Archdeacon's foreword	3
Our location	4
Our vision	6
Person specification	8
What we offer: The ministry team	9
What we offer: The vicarage	12
What we offer: The deanery	13
Our parishes: factsheets	14
Our parishes: Sunday services	17
<i>Our parishes...</i>	
The parish of Dalwood	18
The parish of Kilmington	20
The parish of Shute with Whitford	22
The parish of Stockland	24
The parish of Yarcombe	26
Social, print and web media	28
Personal comments	30

Contents

# Archdeacon's foreword



## Thank You

Thank you for your interest in the role of Priest-in-Charge of the Five Alive East Devon Mission Community. This Post presents a great opportunity to work with a rural group of parishes to explore emerging ways of being Church at the heart of small communities. Our plan is that over time this Post will become a significant part of a wider Team centered on the market town of Axminster.

## Our Diocesan Vision

We seek to be people who together are:

### Growing in Prayer

Prayer is conversation with God and is part of a healthy Christian life. Prayer is a life-giving activity that opens up deep places within us to God's transforming grace. It is essential if we are to become the people and the Church God calls us to be.

## Making new disciples

As the Christian story is less and less known, we must find new ways of telling the story, of explaining the faith and giving a reason for the hope that is in us. With Jesus Christ as our companion and guide, we can travel through life differently.

## Serving the people of Devon with joy

As followers of Jesus Christ, we want to make a difference in the world and make God's love and justice known. In our church life, we seek to be local, participatory and outward-looking.

Further information regarding our Diocesan Vision can be found at:

[www.exeter.anglican.org/who-we-are/vision-strategy](http://www.exeter.anglican.org/who-we-are/vision-strategy)

The Venerable Andrew Beane  
Archdeacon of Exeter  
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# Our location

The Five Alive Mission Community is a united benefice of five parishes in rural East Devon, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, nestling beneath the Blackdown Hills. We are part of the Honiton Deanery within the Diocese of Exeter.

The benefice incorporates the Umborne valley and the villages and hamlets of Whitford, Shute, Kilmington, Dalwood, Stockland and Yarcombe. Geographically, it is 13 miles in length between the centres of the most northern and southern villages.

The mission community villages rely largely on land-based activities with the populations being made up of families with long connections with the area, others who live here but work in nearby towns and a number of retired people who have been attracted by the beauty of the area.

The area's demographic is wide, reflecting the broad social mix in rural England, however, the majority of our congregations are enthusiastic and vibrant retirees.

All our parishes benefit from strong supportive community spirit, demonstrated by volunteers running the shop and post office in Dalwood, the recent reopening of the Kings Arms in Stockland by villagers

buying shares to make this a community asset. A monthly community lunch provides social interaction and outreach in the benefice. Pastoral care is strong with home-visiting teams and rotas to take patients for hospital visits. Socially, the parishes can boast singing groups, skittles teams, knitting and craft groups and drama groups.

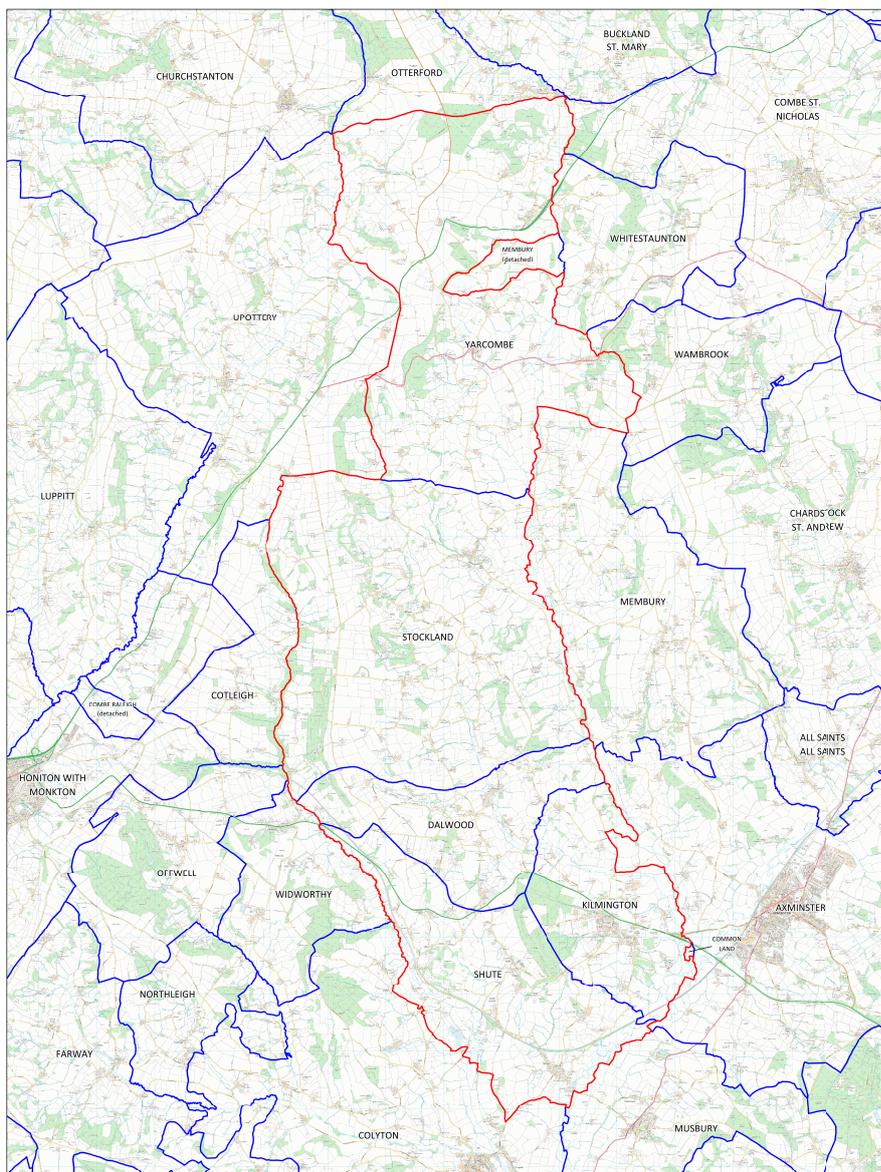
Most parishes have volunteers who regularly mow the churchyards, ring the bells, arrange flowers and generally relieve the vicar of tasks associated with the day-to-day care and running of the church, hopefully leaving the vicar time to get fully involved in the many social activities to be found in each village. Each parish holds an annual fair or fete which is a major social event and fundraiser for the village organisations and charities.

Communications are well served in the nearby towns with good rail links at Axminster, Taunton and Exeter but only Kilmington, Shute and Yarcombe have any form of bus service, so for getting around the mission community a car is essential.

The benefice is bounded by the A35 between Honiton and Dorchester to the south and by the A30/303 Honiton/Yeovil (London) to the north.



**Benefice of Kilmington, Stockland, Dalwood, Yarcombe and Shute:  
The Five Alive Mission Community**



This map was produced for the Diocese of Exeter by Alistair Sutherland on 11 February 2020 with digital data from Dotted Eyes. It contains parish data supplied by the Commissioners of the Church of England, and Ordnance Survey data reproduced with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO. © Crown copyright and database right 2020. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey licences nos 100040148 and 100019918.

# Our vision

Our vision is rooted in community; and community is rooted in place; and place is rooted in history. We are not here in our villages by accident. God has placed each of us here in our parishes for a purpose.

We need to work together prayerfully to understand and put into practice our vision. Also, we pray that our vicar will be an inspirational leader as we journey on our vision together. Vision shapes, motivates and releases action. It needs to shape the life of the church and the lives of those who are members of that church. People need to be able to hold it, in some form, in their hearts and minds.

A few months ago, at a Vacancy Vision Evening, members of the Five Alive met and began a journey of exploring our vision. From our thoughts and discussions, we began to develop ideas from the feedback people gave in that meeting.



Three key words are discipleship, mission and community; in other words, growing in fullness of faith, living out our faith beyond our comfort zones and investing in relationships within and beyond the church. At the Vacancy Vision Evening the answers to the question, “What might God be calling your church to in the next five years?” revealed four key themes for us to explore.

- Go deeper
- Strengthen partnerships
- Reach out
- Experiment and take risks

## Go deeper

Responses included: God is calling us, “to be more faithful and committed disciples, to learn more about the Bible and understand our faith so that we can share it with outsiders and bring more people in” and “to encourage the congregation to be Disciples of Christ”.

## Strengthen partnerships

Responses were: To “work together more collaboratively as a mission community” and “Across the Five Alive community there are people with gifts, skills and talents to be used in the service of God and we are not just waiting for one ordained person to come and fill the gaps!”

# Vision

## Reach out

The desire for new people, especially younger people, to come and join the congregations was prevalent in the responses.

*"To encourage more people to join the church family," and to "reach out to our village and neighbours to share in worship and love" and "find creative ways to express the experience of the love of God in our lives".*

## Experiment and take risks

Responses included: *"To adapt services to be attractive to the young," and "To accept change and other forms of worship rather than arguing to maintain the status quo."*

*"We do not need to be afraid of redefining Christian priorities to cater for lasting change in society and the environment."*

We have been working hard in our parishes to encourage the growth of the church but realise that there is much more we can do and with perhaps a different approach.

A new leader will hopefully help us to take things further and with encouragement will help us to work together to attain greater things in the future. We need to continue to encourage the next generation into the church and to play an active part.

Having agreed this vision we will turn our attention in the coming months to developing our Mission Action Plan to guide us towards achieving our vision.

*"Friendly village and church"*



# Who are we looking for?

We are a **Mission Community of Five Rural Parishes** in East Devon. All of us are passionate about sharing God's love and care with the whole community, not just our worshippers. Therefore, we are seeking and praying for an inspiring priest who will play a full part in our Five Alive communities.

## **We can offer:**

- ✓ Two Licensed Readers
- ✓ Part-time Mission Community Administrator
- ✓ Pastoral Teams in each parish
- ✓ Lay Led and Family Service Teams throughout the Mission Community
- ✓ Open the Book Team which visits our three Primary Schools
- ✓ Regular, established Outreach and Community events in all parishes
- ✓ Close links and shared services with other churches in our parishes
- ✓ A vicarage in Kilmington

## **We are praying for a priest who:**

- ✓ Is passionate about rural ministry and is willing to have a high profile in our villages by maximising pastoral care and being a visible presence to the whole community
- ✓ Lives a prayerful life who can help us to be more prayerful and heedful of God's word
- ✓ Can reach the community in fresh ways, welcoming the challenges and

opportunities of our parishes, village schools and other groups, and working with us for the benefit of all

- ✓ Can communicate in a friendly and caring way with people of all ages and walks of life, is a good listener, who is outgoing and approachable, with a spiritual heart who encourages us in our strengths
- ✓ Can be a spiritual leader who will inspire us with hope for the future
- ✓ Has good teaching and preaching abilities who can work energetically as part of a team, able to affirm and motivate others and engage in discussion
- ✓ Is willing to build upon our already good and mutual relationships with our Methodist and Baptist friends together with neighbouring Mission Communities and the Honiton Deanery in general
- ✓ Values the diversity of Christian worship and will encourage and engage with young people and families
- ✓ Is an accessible and social person with a good sense of humour who will feel at home with us

***If you are such a paragon of virtue who can satisfy our wishes, please go immediately to the application form and submit it without delay!***

# What we offer: The ministry

## Anna Crabbe Licensed Reader

I was licensed as a reader with Exeter Diocese in October 2018 and have permission to take funerals. I did three years of training with the South West Ministry, which was based in Exeter and Plymouth.

I did my theology degree at Leeds University then went to Southampton University to do a two-year postgraduate certificate in social work.



I worked for two years as a medical social worker at the Royal Devon & Exeter Hospital specialising in the oncology and accident and emergency departments.

I then married and had three children before

eventually going to Exeter University to do a PGCE specialising in music. Having taught in primary schools for many years, I retired and, a few years later, started my reader training. I have six wonderful grandchildren which keeps me busy and I love living in Kilmington and being able to serve God in such welcoming communities.

## Gill Heighway, Licensed Reader

I started my training as a reader way back in 1996 in the Diocese of Lichfield. We were living at Shawbury, Shropshire, at the time as my husband was in the RAF. After two years of training, we moved to Kilmington, Devon, where we'd had a house since 1988.

I then had to wait a few years before the 'powers that be' decided if I could continue my training or start again! Yes, you guessed it, I had to start again. I restarted my training in 2005 at Exeter University and Marjon in Plymouth and was finally licensed in 2007.

My background is in education; I completed a teaching degree in religious studies and education at Christ Church College, Canterbury, in 1980; swiftly married and went to live in West Germany for four years, where I taught in British Forces primary schools and had our first child.

Back in the UK we had two more children and, whilst having a break from teaching, I did certificate courses in dyslexia, British sign language and special needs teaching.

On my return to teaching, I became a special needs co-ordinator at Seaton Primary School and did a couple of short stints in other local primaries before moving to teach adults with learning disabilities for several years in Axminster.



I then moved to a special needs school in Taunton where I worked, heading up the autism unit and the secondary phase of the school until retirement.

We're very happy living in Kilminster; my husband has come back to his roots having been born in Stockland and grown up in Kilminster. Our three children all live in the South West, so we see them and our four grandchildren regularly.

I dip into all sorts of local activities, I try to keep fit with swimming, pilates and walking,

and took up bell ringing in 2018 and have really caught the bug! Our churches are a lifeline to many in our rural communities and it's a real privilege to serve in the Five Alive Mission Community.

### Rachel Hudson, Mission Community Administrator

I am the Five Alive Mission Community administrator and have held this position since November 2018 following my move to Devon with my family - husband Mike and young son Joshua.

Mike is the associate pastor at The Baptist Church, Kilminster, also known as The Beacon, and therefore I am also involved in the baptist church and provide a useful link between the two denominations.

Alongside my position within the Five Alive Mission Community, I also work three days per week preparing accounts at a local company, Arada Stoves, and the rest of my time is usually taken up with chasing after my two-year-old son.

I also keep the church's websites and Facebook page running as well as being the first point of contact for weddings and Christenings. I attend our MCC meetings, send out the agendas and reading material, take the minutes and then distribute these shortly afterward.

I deal with all incoming emails to our Five Alive inbox as well as managing the mission community's phone line.

I really enjoy working for the Five Alive Mission Community because it has given me some opportunities to use some skills that I haven't required previously, such as taking minutes, updating websites, and learning how to use different computer programmes for making posters or tables for The Parishes' Paper.



The position has also given me the freedom and flexibility to work alongside being able to stay at home with my son, who is my number one priority.

**Martin Nunns,  
Lay Chair, Mission Community Council**

I became the lay chair of the Five Alive Mission Community, East Devon, in January 2019 having worshipped at St Peter's Church, Dalwood, with my wife, Caroline, for over 25 years. We have led a number of house groups during our time in Devon and before when we lived in Malmesbury, Wiltshire.

We are members of one of the lay leadership teams at St Peter's, responsible for our 'Worship for All' services. I am passionate to ensure that the church reaches out to bring God's message to as many people as possible living in our communities.

I am very involved in the production of our monthly parish magazine, The Parishes' Paper. The magazine is designed to reach out into the community with a mixture of religious and village news. Back issues can be viewed online using [fivealive.org/upcoming-events](https://fivealive.org/upcoming-events).

I have worked for the last 40 years in the construction industry for a Swedish-based organisation. I am nearly fully retired now but still have the occasional assignment in Sweden. Our children, Sophie and Tom, have both left home now but are in touch and visit us regularly.



# What we offer: The vicarage



The vicarage is situated at Kilmington, near Axminster, postcode EX13 7RF. It is conveniently located next to Kilmington's church on one side and Kilmington Village Hall and the Kilmington Baptist Church on the other side. There is a good country shop selling fresh produce within walking distance and Kilmington Primary School is a short walk away.

Kilmington Vicarage is a modern two-storey, light and airy, four-bedroom house set in good-sized gardens and fantastic views across the Axe Valley. The property is served by mains water and drainage and has a condensing oil boiler with new thermostatic controls installed in 2019 with full central heating system. There is a wood store and garden shed with a number of fruit trees.

The ground floor comprises study, cloakroom, sitting room with multi-fuel burner and sliding patio doors leading to the garden, dining room, kitchen and utility. The kitchen and utility were refitted in 2014 and there is pedestrian access from the utility to the integral garage.

The first floor comprises a double bedroom with en-suite, two further double bedrooms, one single bedroom and a family bathroom.

# What we offer: The deanery

Honiton Deanery has a mission to enable all parishes to flourish by sharing good practice and achieving effective communication.

Our strategy centres on mission communities with parishes working together to share and grow the Gospel of our Lord.

We must be mission-orientated, community-focused and locally-based in our churches today.

The Honiton Deanery in East Devon is an attractive rural deanery comprising the small towns of Honiton, Axminster and Seaton plus picturesque rural and seaside villages, the latter being part of the Jurassic Coast.

Cate Edmonds is our rural dean and there are eight stipendiary clergy, including two self-supporting clergy and one house for duty post and nine lay readers, together with several lay-led worship and pastoral teams.

We are involved with the wider Honiton Deanery in activities such as Mission Shed, Joint Lent courses in 2019, A Walk through the Old Testament and World Day of Prayer,

and working on the Honiton Deanery Plan through the Honiton Deanery Pastoral Committee.

*"Good to know we are part of a wider Christian community"*

*"Upbeat hymns, with actions, are fun to sing"*

*"Friendship means a lot"*

*"Good to make friends from a wider circle"*

Parish	Total if applicable	Dalwood	Kilmington	Shute with Whitford	Stockland	Yarcombe
<b>1 Summary of Information</b>						
a) Name and number of C of E churches/places of worship in the parish	6	1 St Peters, Dalwood	1 St Giles Church, Kilmington	2 St Michael's Shute and St Mary at the Cross, Whitford	1 St. Michael and All Angels Church	1 St John the Baptist Church, Yarcombe
b) Population of the parish	2921	400	950	650	600	421
c) Number on electoral roll	230	29	84	19	51	47
d) Number of participants	116	26	38	15	20	17
e) Usual Sunday attendance over 16	114	24	38	12	20 and 40 for a family service.	17
f) Usual Sunday attendance under 16	3	0 and 2 at a family service	1	0	2 and 16 at a family service	0 and 10 at a family service
g) Approximate percentage of the congregation living outside the parish		5%	5%	0%	7.5%	15%
h) Name the church of other denominations in the parish	4	Dalwood Methodist Chapel, Loughwood Meeting House	The Beacon Baptist Church	None	None	Yarcombe Baptist Chapel
<b>2 Services including Occasional</b>						
a) How do you describe the church tradition	We are a broad church open to different traditions and styles of worship					
b) Give the pattern of Sunday services and the books used	Please refer to page 17					
c) Numbers during the last year calendar year of 2019 of the following:						
Baptisms	8	3	3	1	1	0

Confirmation candidates	6	4	2	0	0	0
Weddings	8	3	2	1	0	2
Funerals in church	28	5	6	5	7	5
Funerals in Crematorium	4	2	Not known	Not known	2	0
<b>3 The Parishes</b>						
a) number of nursing homes/ retirement homes	1	0	1	0	0	0
b) Any youth centres	1	None	None	None	Youth Club for 7 to 13 yr olds meets once a month	None
c) Any community centres and children's centres	12	Village Hall, Folly Nursery, The Pavilion, Public House	Village Hall, 2 Public Houses, weekly mother and toddler group	The MCC's only Starbucks!	Village Hall, Public House	Village Hall, Public House
d) Names of hospitals in the parish	0	None	None	None	None	None
e) Other key institutions		None	None	None	Tennis Club and Cricket Club	None
<b>4 Schools and Education</b>						
a) Names of schools in the parish. State whether they are church or community or independent schools	3	None	Kilmington Primary School, part of Axe Beacon Federation, community	Shute Primary School, community	Stockland C of E Primary Academy, church	None
b) No. of children on roll - is this rising, falling or static	286	n/a	98 static	80 static	108 static	n/a

c) What relationship/links are there between church and school		n/a	Very good. The Open the Book team visits each school monthly during term times. The schools use church buildings for activities such as assemblies, music lessons, nativity plays, leaving services, carol services, Easter Trails and concerts. At the C of E school one member of staff is on the PCC and 2 members of the PCC are Foundation Governors.	n/a
5 )Personnel				
a) How many clergy support your parish/ Mission Community/ benefice?	Two Readers self –supporting and retired clergy support all the 5 parishes			

# Our parishes: Sunday services

Parishes

## Sample pattern of Sunday services

DATE	Dalwood	Kilmington	Shute with Whitford	Stockland	Yarcombe
<b>First Sunday</b>	11:00am Family Service Lay led	11:00am Morning Prayer	9:30am Holy Communion *Whitford*	11:00am Parish Communion	11:00am Family Service
<b>Second Sunday</b>	11:00am Parish Communion	9:30am Morning Worship	11:00am Parish Communion	11:00am Family Service	11:00am Morning Worship
<b>Third Sunday</b>	11:00am Family Service	9:30am Parish Communion	09:30am Family Service	9:30am Parish Communion	11:00am Parish Communion
<b>Fourth Sunday</b>	11:00am Morning Worship	11:00am Family Service	11:00am Morning Prayer	11:00am Parish Communion	6:00pm Songs of Praise
<b>Fifth Sunday</b>	<i>Mission Community Service at Stockland</i>				

# The parish of Dalwood

"Much good  
worship here"

## Parish Name:

*St Peter's Church, Dalwood*

**Population:** 400

**No on the electoral role:** 29

## The village

Dalwood is a beautiful East Devon village of 400 residents situated at the southern end of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Blackdown Hills. The population consists of families with generations of local connections and newcomers who have integrated well and brought much to the village. There is a very strong community spirit as demonstrated by the number of organisations and the range of events put on



each year, most of which raise funds for numerous charities. Jubilee Field and Pavilion, a recreational trust has been set up with a small community room, excellent outdoor play area and adult gym. There is a private nursery with some 70 children enrolled. In recent years, more young families have moved into the village. There is a community shop, a village focal point, staffed entirely by volunteers. The shop also boasts a small post office. It acts as a central meeting and information point, soon to be enhanced by a new coffee shop.

The village hall is a popular and well-used asset, with a well-equipped kitchen. All large village meetings, plays, concerts, and indoor sports clubs use the hall. It has a car park attached. The Tuckers Arms is the local pub, built in the 14th Century, and is now an important community asset with an excellent restaurant. Here, people meet to socialise, play in various skittles teams and come for church events such as Lent courses and discussion suppers. Further information and photographs can be found on the village website, including a copy of the draft Neighbourhood Plan at [www.dalwoodparish.co.uk](http://www.dalwoodparish.co.uk).



### The church

There are records of Dalwood's church going back to medieval times, but the present building is probably 15th Century. The church was extensively refurbished in 1881, after the people of Dalwood raised a large sum of

money to get the church into good repair. Currently, the church building itself is in a good state of repair and maintenance is overseen by the fabric committee.

### Worship

St Peter's Church is at the centre of the village. Sunday services are held at 11am, and are a mixture of clergy and lay led. Holy communion is celebrated on Wednesday mornings at 9.30am. There are occasional joint-services with the other four churches in the mission community and the village methodist church. The PCC meets four times a year.

### Church activities

Activities for church and village are guided by strong and enthusiastic lay worship teams, a pastoral team, and a social and fundraising committee. A monthly community lunch is held in the village hall. Other events include house groups, coffee concerts, flower festival, Christmas festival and many outreach events.

### Finances

Church finances are well managed with a good reserve. We are planning to set up a Friends of St Peter's to aid fundraising.

### The future

We are looking forward to welcoming our new priest who's vision he or she will share this with us and inspire us to go forward with faith, spiritual guidance and enthusiasm and to share the gospel with everyone in a friendly and accessible way.

# The parish of Kilmington

*"Moved to Kilmington in  
1940, choirboy. Wonderful  
friendly village"*

## **Parish Name:**

*St Giles's Church, Kilmington*

**Population:** 850

**No on the electoral role:** 84

## **The village**

Kilmington is a small country village in a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, about five minutes' drive from the town of Axminster, which has an excellent range of facilities for families. Axminster station has frequent services to London.



Exeter International Airport can be reached in 25 minutes. It is in easy reach of Exmoor, Dartmoor, South Devon and the Dorset Jurassic coast. The population of Kilmington is approximately 950, it is a caring village with many active clubs and organisations.

We have the parish church and the Beacon Baptist Church, the village school, the Kilmington playing field, Millers Farm Shop, a garage, a weekly Post Office and two pubs.

We are in the catchment area for Colyton Grammar School and other excellent secondary schools. Further details of the village can be found on the website: [www.kilmingtonvillage.com](http://www.kilmingtonvillage.com).

The parish church plays a significant role in the life of the village and we have very good links with the Beacon Baptist Church holding several joint-services with them every year including a World Day of Prayer Service.

## **The church**

While there is evidence of a chapel on the site of St Giles's Church in 937AD, the church was built in the 12th Century; the tower added in the 14th Century; six bells were installed at various times between 1672 and 1845.

The body of the church was rebuilt in 1862. The churchyard was extended in 2000.

Major improvements were made in 2006/7 with the addition of the north porch, an accessible toilet and a kitchen area at the rear of the church. The church currently has no church wardens; we are trying to rectify this. We have an active PCC and several sub-committees; a choir and musical group under the direction of a musical director and a growing team of bell ringers. At the PCC AGM in 2019 there were 84 on the electoral role.



### Worship

Attendance at regular services varies as to the style of worship, large congregations attend special and seasonal services. Our demographic tends to be retirees with families attending when specially invited. Weekly services are held throughout the mission community as are midweek services. Several special services are held each year; Easter Sunday, informal dawn service at Shute Beacon, Palm Sunday procession with a donkey and service with the baptist

church, rogation at one of the village farms, Songs of Praise in the vicarage garden, ecumenical Remembrance Sunday services in St Giles's Church or the Beacon and the war memorial, advent carol service, Christingle, carol and crib services.

### Church activities

Regular events include Friday coffee shop; pop-up café during term-time for parents and children from our village school and a Let's Celebrate service bi-monthly for people with additional needs. We have an Open the Book team which visits Stockland, Shute and Kilmington schools each month. Fundraising events are held throughout the year ranging from concerts, quiz nights, coffee mornings, harvest supper, cream teas, annual fete, lent lunches, open garden teas, supper talks. There is also a lay-led fortnightly Bible group.

### Finance

While the finances of the church have remained in a healthy state in the past, the regular giving has reduced, and expenditure has been high due to restoration work. The KPCC is considering ways of increasing regular giving to the church and encouraging direct debit payments. We are actively pursuing grants from several organisations. We always pay our diocesan share.

### The future

The residents of Kilmington look forward to welcoming a new vicar to St Giles's and our mission community and working on our vision to increasing engagement with the village community and serving others with joy.

# The parish of Shute with Whitford

*“A supportive wide  
community with strong  
links to all the villages”*

**Parish name:** *St Michael's Church,  
Shute*

**Population:** 650

**No on the electoral role:** 19

## The village

The rural appearance of Shute belies the parish's unusual energy and creativity. Although the church and the parish are facing the same problems as those in many other rural areas, it is meeting them with determination and a willingness to innovate.



It is mostly scattered in a number of hamlets or isolated dwellings throughout the parish.

The two main centres are the area around the parish church, St Michael's, which stands next to a 13th Century National Trust house,

Shute Barton, and the hamlet of Whitford, which is host to a chapel of ease, St Mary at the Cross. The population is a mixture of farmers and retired people, but also a number of younger families and professionals who commute to Exeter and London or work remotely.

## The church

St Michael's Church was in existence as early as 1200. It is a medieval building which, until 1860, was a chapel of ease dependent on the nearby town of Colyton. It houses a number of fine memorials to the Pole family, who were resident in the manorial house from the 16th Century until 1926. St Mary at the Cross, Whitford is a more modern and smaller, built in 1907 by popular subscription.

## Worship

In general, three services a month are held at St Michael's, and one at St Mary at the Cross. The services are a mixture of morning prayer and communion services, usually led by clergy or lay readers. However, during the interregnum, a plainsong choir was formed with the intention of singing evensongs with high traditional liturgy once every two months.

The first service with this choir, lay-led on Advent Sunday, saw the congregation rise from the average of 12 to over 50.

### Church activities

The parish is remarkably culturally active. St Michael's was adapted to hold a stage in 1981, and since then, a local drama group, the Shute Theatre and Arts Guild, has regularly performed plays of professional quality at the church.



Five years ago, local residents with literary connections established the Shute Festival of Literature and Landscape ([www.shutefest.org.uk](http://www.shutefest.org.uk)) which regularly sees writers and speakers of national prominence visiting Shute. The church is also a venue for regular classical, choral and jazz concerts, as well as exhibitions and historical lectures. The church is also used by the neighbouring

primary school for assemblies, concerts and services. The church attempts to serve the community by acting as a collection point for the local food bank, and has also collected clothes for refugees in need. Also, the Open the Book team goes monthly and uses the church for the presentations. Each month the church also hosts Open the Book events in the school.

Last year, the PCC ran a community survey in conjunction with the Exeter Growing the Rural Church Team to look at preferences for worship, and how the church could better serve the community. The survey found that traditional liturgy was broadly preferred, but that the building of St Michael's should be made more adaptable and comfortable for worship and a wide number of community uses, so as to increase community participation and ensure the sustainability of the church. Following this survey, a grant of £8,000 has just been made by the National Lottery to finance a feasibility study for adapting the layout and facilities of the church, with a view to further fundraising.

### Finances

The finances of the parish are stable, and the Common Fund has been paid in full. Recent successful fundraising enabled the restoration of a number of historic church windows.

### The future

We very much believe that there is great potential for the church to be grown here and to serve the community in accordance with the Christian mission.

# The parish of Stockland

*" I enjoy the relaxed and friendly atmosphere and our very vibrant and lively Bible study group"*

**Parish name:** St Michael & All Angels Church, Stockland  
**Population:** 600  
**No on the electoral roll:** 51

## The village

Stockland village centre has many old houses with newer houses on the outskirts. The Stockland C of E Primary Academy is rated as 'outstanding' and has an excellent reputation. There is also a preschool, also rated 'outstanding', which operates in part of the village hall.



The King's Arms, an ancient coaching inn, has very recently reopened after being closed for six years, following its takeover by the community.

The village hall is well used by the

community for both public and private functions and its grounds are used by the Stockland and Yarcombe Cricket Club as well as being the site of the Stockland Fair, a popular annual event held in May of each year. SWAG (Stockland Women's Activities Group), which took off after the WI disbanded, meets once a month. There is a vibrant and busy tennis club and a youth club for 7-13-year-olds which takes place every month.

## The church

The church is located close to the centre of the village, down a short lane. The present church is mainly 15th century and built of dressed flint and Ham stone, with the original tracery, door surrounds and pillars in Beer stone. The church underwent a thorough restoration in the 1870s, when roofs were renewed.

More recently, much other work has been done internally including heating, and more recently kitchen and WC facilities were installed.

## Worship

A service is held in the church on most Sundays. A family service is held once a month, led by a lay family service team.

The family services are also included as part of the main annual festival services - Christmas, Easter, Harvest and Remembrance.



Mothering Sunday and the Christingle services alternate between Stockland and Yarcombe churches which both have good family service teams.

A Pause for Prayer is a group which meets once a week and has a membership of eight people.

#### Church activities

We are keen that the church be seen as a community facility. The church is used for various events hosted both by church groups as well as village societies. In recent years, concerts have been held in aid of the community pub campaign and as part of the East Devon Music Festival, which runs bi-annually, for social interaction with the village and for church funds.

The church organises an Easter brunch and a Harvest lunch, both held in the village hall, as well as coffee mornings in the church and a flower festival every few years.

#### Finances

The church is reasonably well-endowed, but annual expenditure has exceeded income for many years. The Common Fund parish share represents about half of total expenditure, but has been paid in full.

#### The future

We want to continue to establish the church as a core institution of the community, valued by all parishioners of all ages.

# The parish of Yarcombe

“The great hills!”

**Parish name:** *St John the Baptist, Yarcombe*

**Population:** 421

**No on the electoral role:** 47

## The village

The parish of Yarcombe consists of Yarcombe village and the hamlet of Marsh. Yarcombe straddles the A30, almost equidistant from Honiton and Chard. Marsh lies beside the A303 to the north. In an area of four by two miles, there is a population of around 500 people living in 200 houses and the parish is in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty within the Blackdown Hills.



The centre of Yarcombe village is situated around the church, the village hall, the recently reopened Yarcombe Inn and The Belfry Hotel. There is a 30-year-old estate of

19 houses. Marsh sits on the old A30 and has a very good pub. There is an average age mix, but with a lot of retired people. Primary-age children attend Stockland Primary Academy or Upton Primary School or Buckland St Mary Primary School. Older children go to Honiton, Colyton or Uplyme schools.

There are 55 children under 11 and 10 over 12 years of age. This is very much a farming area with about 20 working farms or small holdings and quite a few small businesses run from homes.

The Post Office in the village hall car park is open for two hours a week. There are no other shops, but a bus to Honiton and back once a week. Challenges include lack of affordable housing for young people and bungalows for older people who want to down-size, plus poor transport links.

There is a strong sense of community helped by the monthly magazine, *The Yarcombe Voices*, keeping us in touch with activities and events. Over 185 copies are printed each month and are personally delivered by a team of 18 people. Other information is sent round on the internet by e-Voices.

There are many organisations in the village which include short mat bowls, skittles, The Tuesday Club (WI alternative), a bi-weekly craft group, a small orchestra and a summer croquet club. There is a monthly market in the village hall which is well supported by villagers. Many of the young people join the very active Yarcombe and Stockland Young Farmers' Group. The Parish Council meets monthly and publishes the Yarcombe Information Leaflet. The Good Neighbour scheme offers appropriate assistance to anyone who needs it. Yarcombe website is full of information about the village and includes old and new photographs - [www.yarcombe.net](http://www.yarcombe.net).

### The church

There has been a church in Yarcombe since the 13th Century. A large team of volunteers care for the cleaning, churchyard and flowers - comments in our visitors' book often say how well-cared for it is. Now the congregation, (aged mainly over 60), has shrunk with an average of 15-25, but with the most coming to family services. The annual carol service, harvest and Remembrance Sunday services are well attended. We have a very strong link with Yarcombe Baptist Chapel and have frequent joint-services in both venues. The vicarage is currently let. There are seven members of the PCC and two churchwardens meet four times a year.

### Worship

There is one lay-led family service team for the monthly family service. We also have

parish communion, morning worship and evening worship once each month. A Building Committee looks after the fabric of the church and the churchyard. We have just had our heating system completely updated. There is a worship committee and a team of pastoral visitors who visit each house on their patch once a year with a Christmas card and take a welcome pack to all new residents. There is a peal of six bells with enthusiastic bell ringers. There is a small choir and an organist.

### Church activities

A weekly Pause for Prayer time, a fortnightly ecumenical Bible study in term times. The church organises regular community lunches with a speaker. The Yarcombe Terrier Races are on the first Saturday in August - the main fundraising event of the year. In May 2017, we had a very successful Yarcombe's Got Talent event which included a concert in the church. Friday Forum meets monthly in the winter months to discuss topical issues. We collect Christmas shoeboxes for the Samaritan's Purse charity and there is a monthly Solo lunch after church or chapel.

### Finances

We pay our Parish Share each year and at the moment are financially sound.

### The future

Yarcombe residents look forward to welcoming and working together with a new vicar to St John the Baptist and our mission community.

# Social, print and web media



The Five Alive Mission Community East Devon has multiple different online presences. We have A Church Near You page per parish, as well as a mission community website. We have recently begun using Facebook as another platform to advertise any events that may be taking place within the mission community. Since the outbreak of the Covid-19 we have organised monthly online Zoom services to supplement the reduced church services and during periods of lockdown these are held weekly.

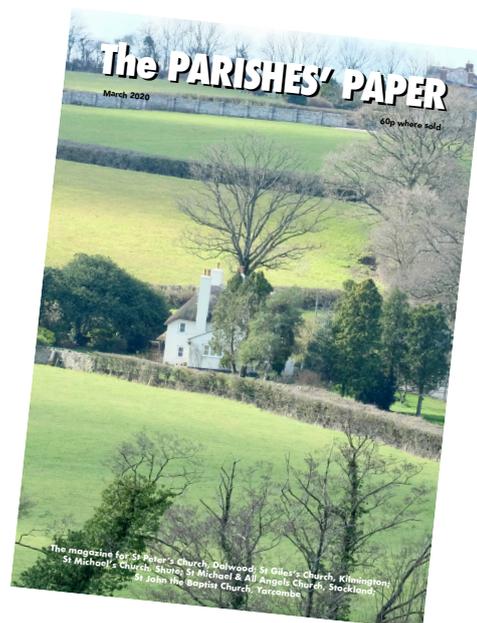
## A Church Near You

- St Giles's Church, Kilmington - [www.achurchnearyou.com/church/8734/](http://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/8734/)
- St Peter Church, Dalwood - [www.achurchnearyou.com/church/8736/](http://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/8736/)
- St Michael and All Angels, Stockland - [www.achurchnearyou.com/church/8735/](http://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/8735/)
- St John the Baptist, Yacombe - [www.achurchnearyou.com/church/8737/](http://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/8737/)
- St Michael's Church, Shute - [www.achurchnearyou.com/church/8738/](http://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/8738/)
- St Mary at the Cross, Whitford - [www.achurchnearyou.com/church/8739/](http://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/8739/)
- Five Alive Mission Community Website - [www.fivealive.org](http://www.fivealive.org)
- Facebook Page - [www.facebook.com/fivealivemcc/](https://www.facebook.com/fivealivemcc/)

Each website has a calendar which is up-to-date with all services that are planned for each church and upcoming events.

The Five Alive main contact details are through our administrator - Rachel Hudson. Our contact email address is [5alivemc@gmail.com](mailto:5alivemc@gmail.com) and the contact number is [07752 098001](tel:07752098001).

The Five Alive Mission Community also boasts its own popular parish magazine. The content is based on church and community news and events, including features and photographs. The publication is well supported and designed to reach out into the community. Back issues can be viewed online using [fivealive.org/upcoming-events](http://fivealive.org/upcoming-events).



# Personal comments

Having fun being able to run around the fields.

The experience of public speaking when reading from the bible or conducting prayers is great for self confidence

I like living in Stockland because there are lots of trees and leaves

We are fortunate to have such able and sincere Lay Readers.

Making lots of friends in the village and school.

fun activities during and after family service.

Up-Beat hymns, (with actions) which are fun to sing.

Strong community friendly & welcoming church

I love the community spirit and the bi-weekly Bible study meetings.

The hills the valleys the trees and hedgerows The sea + seashore the many paths and places to walk.

Great community spirit

I love living in St. Giles parish because of a warm, loving community.

We have such a friendly community in Kilmington reflected in the church with such caring parishioners

Country living  
The Kings Arms  
friendly caring people  
Tennis Club.

It makes me feel a real part of the community.

I ~~love~~ like living in Stockland, because I like animals and we lived on a farm.

I like being in the Countryside because it is really quiet and peaceful.

VERY WELCOMING  
TO NEWCOMERS  
TO THE VILLAGE

To be able to have my children go to a village school.

We really enjoy 'The Open the book' team coming into school

We love going to messy church

Beautiful Countryside

I like living in Stockland because it is a really friendly village with good community spirit. All residents have time for each other and are good neighbours.

The Countryside (God's Country)

I like where I live because ~~of~~ of the nice ~~and~~ views of the animals.

Thankyou for the animals and fresh air.

60 year worshippis here says something. Though we now live in Axminster - this is still a wonderful place to be to every week for several different community things as well as Church.