

Parish Profiles

Rector (full-time)

An exciting opportunity to lead eight rural parish churches across the Benefices of Dolton and Winkleigh, Devon



CONTENTS

1. Foreword – The Right Reverend Dr Mike Harrison, Bishop of Exeter, and The Venerable Verena Breed, Archdeacon of Barnstaple.

2. Our Vision for the role and what we can offer.

3. Area Profile and Accommodation.

4. The Parishes we serve:

- **Ashreigney** – St James
- **Broadwoodkelly** – All Hallows
- **Brushford** – St Mary
- **Dolton** - St Edmunds & The Rectory (Curate)
- **Dowland** - St Peter's
- **Iddesleigh** - St James
- **Monkokehampton** - All Saints
- **Winkleigh** - All Saints & “The Vicarage” (Rector)



5. Testimonial: The Very Reverend Graham Smith.

6. Appendices:

- A) Benefice fact sheet
- B) Schedule of services
- C) Location map.



A message from Bishop Mike

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age”

Matthew 28:19-20

Our vision in this diocese is that of Jesus in His Great Commission. We aspire to appoint leaders of our Christian communities who practise the presence of our Lord and enable others to do so; leaders who witness, act and relate in ways which make disciples and enable others to do so; leaders who serve in ways which intrigue, attract and engage the wider community, and enable others to do so. In short – pray, grow and serve!

So we are looking for ministerial leaders who:

- are intentionally missional, helping their Christian community to discern who God is sending them to, *and* who God is sending them,
- are developing missional habits and confidence in the faith for members of their congregations, enabling them to be invitational and ambassadorial,
- invest in their own discipleship and well-being, and that of those in their care,
- cultivate vocations, lay and ordained, actively recruiting for initiatives such as the Foundations course and the Exeter Ordination Pathway,
- place children and young people at the heart of our mission, orienting churches to be ever-more welcoming spaces for young people, using existing resources and networks, but also being pioneering in outlook,
- experiment with ways of being and doing church that engage the unengaged – we encourage ambitious plans such as creating two new worshipping communities in the first three years of a new ministry,

You can expect to find:

- support from senior leaders committed to enabling this mission and ministry,

- an outstanding diocesan team, second to none in terms of training provision and opportunities, comms understanding, finance expertise, buildings experience and care for our ministers,
- opportunities for personal and professional development in alignment with the vision of the Great Commission,
- a warm, relational diocese, where diversity is welcomed and honoured,
- a good-humoured, joyful, energetic culture grateful for the privilege of being called into ministry and supportive of missional experimentation, risk-taking and 'having a go',

If you're still reading then I suspect we might be on the same page and I pray that the Holy Spirit might inform, shape and direct your discernment concerning this post.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Foreword – Archdeacon Verena Breed



Thank you for your interest in this full-time post of Rector to the Benefices of Winkleigh (Ashreigney, Broadwoodkelly, Brushford and Winkleigh) and Dolton (Dolton, Dowland, Iddesleigh and Monkokeyhampton). These eight rural parishes are divided in two distinct groups with a strong identity and a real desire to grow younger, be more diverse, and reach out to the wider community. This is an exciting opportunity to lead these two Benefices in the next stage of their journey in which they seek to collaborate under the leadership of a Rector who will hold both benefices in plurality.

Across the benefices there are already great examples of outreach to children, youth and families, with some congregations already being truly “all age”. It is a firm foundation on which the parishes, with your help, will seek to build. The new Rector will not only have the support of experienced Churchwardens and committed lay leaders, but also of the wider deanery, archdeaconry and diocese.

We are seeking a priest with a heart for pastoral care, teaching, preaching and a desire to further mission and ministry. You will be working with a group of parishes looking to strengthen the ways in which they already work together as two benefices, and that want to grow in faith and discipleship.

We would hope that the right candidate will bring new energy and fresh ideas to this role of Rector. While we would welcome someone with experience, candidates for whom this will be a first incumbency are also encouraged to apply. You will be invited to make your home in the Winkleigh Rectory. Ideally we are seeking a candidate who will be able to act as Training Incumbent to a curate; these rural benefices are a wonderful and exciting place to train and gather first experience in mission and ministry.

The successful candidate will get to know those who live and work in these rural parishes and support them as they seek to find new and exciting ways of making a difference across this benefice, encouraging new disciples and enabling them to grow in their discipleship; they would be someone who is open to exploring the possibilities of rural ministry, and prepared to work collaboratively and ecumenically.

We aim to be a diverse and truly representative diocese, and particularly welcome applications from women and those from black and minority ethnic groups. Not only is Devon a beautiful place to call home, but we believe the Diocese of Exeter is a great community of which to be a part. The Dolton and Winkleigh Benefices are all in the Torrington Deanery where the Rev'd Tracey Doyle is Rural Dean and the Revd Steve Turner is Assistant Rural Dean. Tracey is Team Vicar in the Two Rivers Mission Community (MC) and Steve is Vicar of the Great Torrington MC. In turn this Deanery is part of the Archdeaconry of Barnstaple, under the care of the Bishop of Crediton, the Right Reverend Moira Astin.

Jesus came so that we can have life in all its fullness. That is our vision and our hope for the Church in Devon. You are warmly invited to contact me directly if you would like a confidential conversation about the post, and we look forward to welcoming you to the Diocese.

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Widemouth Bay



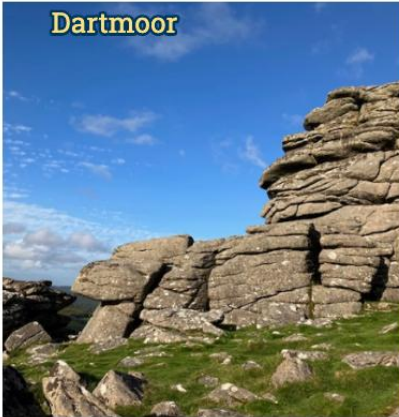
Halsdon Nature Reserve - Dolton



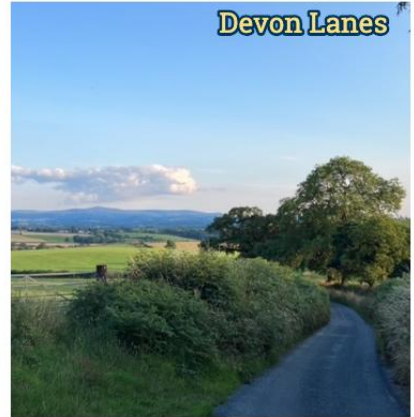
RHS Rosemoor - Torrington



Dartmoor



Devon Lanes



Our Vision

We are two benefices of eight village churches in beautiful, rural Devon united by a shared passion for our communities and supporting the involvement and spiritual wellbeing of people of all ages in our parishes. We seek a prayerful and compassionate rector who will immerse themselves in rural community life, build strong relationships and help our churches grow in faith, love and fellowship.

We would welcome someone who:

- Leads engaging worship, preaching and teaching in varied styles, respecting each church's traditions.
- Is active in pastoral care and a visible presence in our villages and communities.
- Builds relationships with families, young people, schools and the wider community.
- Encourages lay participation, develops people's gifts and supports prayer, Bible study and spiritual growth.
- Strengthens collaboration across the benefices, churches and wider faith communities.
- Is adaptable and good-humoured, with strong interpersonal skills.
- Is committed to rural and farming communities, willing to travel between our churches and become part of village life.

What we can offer:

- Eight churches and vibrant, distinctive communities, all within ten miles, with committed congregations, lay support and PCCs ready to work alongside a new rector. building on strengths and developing new expressions of church and ministry in the area.
- A growing area, with significant new housing and many young families, offering exciting opportunities for outreach through two primary schools, pre-schools, toddler and youth groups.
- Accommodation for both a curate in training and a priest, creating opportunities to develop ministry together.
- A beautiful location north of Dartmoor and within easy reach of Exmoor, the coast, Tarka Trail and local woodland and river walks, alongside excellent local food, pubs, cafés and restaurants.
- A warm, welcoming community in which to live, work and continue your journey with Christ.

Area Profile

Area Profile

All the Churches in the two benefices are within 15-20 minutes driving distance of the Vicarage in Winkleigh. Situated in central Devon, the area remains predominantly agricultural, although occupations are very varied.

We are approximately 20 miles from Bideford and Barnstaple, giving easy access to Exmoor, the North Devon coast and North Cornwall. RHS Rosemoor is about 12 miles towards Bideford. To the south, Winkleigh looks towards Dartmoor, with opportunities for days out on the moor and at the south coast resorts. Exeter, our cathedral city, is 22 miles away.

Hospitals with A&E are available at Barnstaple and Exeter. Local primary schools include Winkleigh, Dolton C of E, Exbourne C of E and Chulmleigh Academy Trust. Well-regarded secondary schools are available at Chulmleigh, Okehampton and Crediton, while many young people attend Exeter College, a sixth-form college. Independent options include Shebbear and West Buckland, both with nearby pick-up points.

Accommodation for the Rector

“The Vicarage” is within easy, flat walking distance of Winkleigh Church and village amenities. It has a large private garden, gated driveway, garage, parking/turning area and two greenhouses.

The front door opens into a large hallway, with a study immediately inside and a downstairs toilet. The spacious living room combines lounge and dining areas, with a serving hatch through to the kitchen. The generous kitchen has modern units, plumbing for a dishwasher, a walk-in larder and space for a dining table. It leads to a utility room and back door, with a covered passageway to the garage and log store.

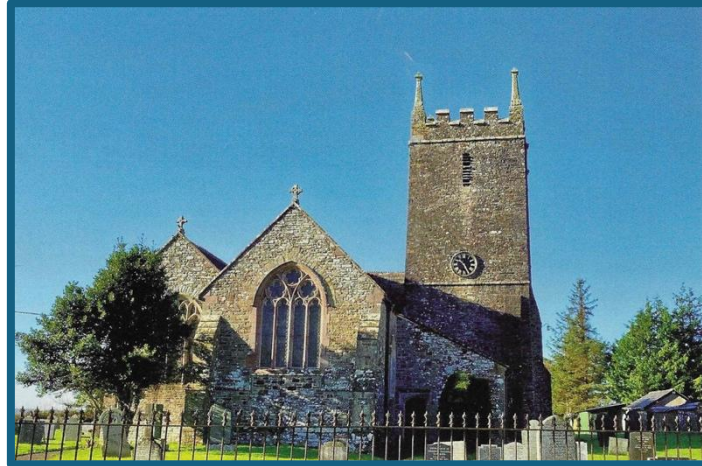


metres from the church.

Upstairs are four bedrooms with fitted cupboards, two with handbasins, and a family bathroom with toilet, bath and shower cubicle. The accommodation is heated by a recent air source heat pump providing hot water, with radiators throughout. There are also solar panels, double glazing and a wood burner in the living room.

The Rectory in Dolton will be available to accommodate a curate and is a 1960s built, 4 bedroomed house about 200

Ashreigney – St James



The village of Ashreigney stands nearly 600 ft. above sea level, two miles from the A377 and about four miles West of Chulmleigh. Winkleigh is about 6 miles away.

This is an agricultural district in which there are around 400 residents, many of whom are retired. We have a few young families, but the majority of the population is of working age. The demographic mix of Ashreigney whilst still of a rural nature is now more eclectic overall. We have a strong core of worshippers with good extra support for feast days.

Included in the Parish of Ashreigney are the hamlets of Riddlecombe, Cottwood, Hayes, Bourne and Bridge Reeve. From the Churchyard the impressive hills of Dartmoor and Exmoor are clearly visible on fine days.

The Parish Church of St. James has interesting architecture and a light interior. There is some Medieval fabric, but the Church is mainly 15th Century and underwent significant restoration in the late 19th Century. In the notable wagon roof one of the bosses is of Three Hares. This is a fascinating and interesting symbol that has been found all over the world. The font is late Norman or Early English. The fine Vowles organ is much enjoyed.

The lovely St John coloured window in St James' Church, Ashreigney, was installed as part of the 1889 restoration and funded by parishioners named John. Several interesting memorial tablets are to be found within the Church, the Belfry and the Churchyard.

In the Tower hang six bells which are rung every Sunday by the active bell ringing team, this is a sociable group, coming from many different walks of life, sharing talents where needed, and always willing to lend a hand in many ways throughout the local parishes embodying a good community spirit. The Church is open every day for quiet reflection, and we have a collection box for Food Bank donations. Many parishioners contribute to arranging our church flowers and more are always welcome to join the rota. Members of our congregation work actively for the North Devon UNESCO Biosphere and Nature Recovery Group.

Ashreigney Village Hall, which was once the school, hosts various functions and meetings throughout the year, some being monthly Community Lunches, Saturday Markets, Hare ‘pop-up-pub’ nights, weekly mobile Post Office service and Friday Café, library provision, Handbells practice, and the annual Garden Show, to name a few. ‘The Ashcombe’ is our parish magazine which is circulated to every home in the Parish, free of charge, and we are active on Facebook pages too. Interaction between St James’ Church and the Village Hall is synonymous with Ashreigney life.



The Parish of Ashreigney seeks a priest with imagination, humour and an ability to build connections, who understands and sympathises with rural life, or is willing to learn, and will engage in village life while fostering civic and secular relationships. The ability to drive is essential. They will lead fundraising initiatives, encourage and mentor lay involvement and help introduce some modern hymns. With currently very small congregations, St James’ is open to new ideas and keen to welcome younger members. We would value an open-minded priest who encourages discussion and gives confidence to question why we do things, looks outwards to the wider world and shares the successes of the wider Church, and develops events in our buildings involving arts, music, poetry and crafts. Above all, we seek someone who will strengthen unity and fellowship between the parishes and encourage everyone to support all our churches.



Broadwoodkelly – All Hallows



Broadwoodkelly is a rural, strongly agricultural parish of approximately 2,700 acres (4.5 square miles), with a population of just under 300. It lies to the southwest of Winkleigh, which is about a five-minute drive away. The parish includes Broadwoodkelly itself, plus the hamlets of Splatt and Ingleigh Green. There are 110 dwellings, including farms, some holiday cottages and a few small businesses. It is close to the main bus routes for North Tawton, Crediton and Exeter and is served by a Ring-and-Ride bus to Okehampton. However, most inhabitants are reliant on their own transport or lifts from neighbours. The surrounding lanes are particularly nice for walking and riding.

Our community spirit is excellent. There is a packed timetable of events hosted by two organisations working in tandem: the Friends of All Hallows, and the Village Hall Committee. There is a modernised Village Hall (built in 1876 and a school until 1945). The annual pantomime put on by All Hallows and Broadwoodkelly Players is renowned in the area, involving members of all ages in one way or another. Their calendar includes quiz nights, discos, pizza and curry nights, big breakfasts, dog shows, soup and pudding days, murder mysteries, and so on. The hall is also the venue for classes like Pilates and art. There are also two walking groups. For such a small parish, cohesiveness, support for initiatives and inclusiveness is outstanding. The priest has always been, and is expected to be, welcomed and involved in its life. It also maintains its own website <https://www.broadwoodkelly.org.uk>

The community includes people of all ages and backgrounds, with around 40 children and all walks of life represented. Around 50% of the population is over 50, although the average age is falling. Unemployment is low, despite the parish being in West Devon Borough, an area of moderate deprivation. The parish catchment schools are Winkleigh Primary School and Chulmleigh College, ranked 15th in the UK for state provision for 11–16-year-olds and among the top schools in Devon, Cornwall and Somerset. Sixth-form students generally attend Exeter College, rated Outstanding by Ofsted and regarded as one of the UK's leading FE and tertiary colleges.



All Hallows Church is at the east end of Broadwoodkelly, in a very prominent position in the heart of the main village. It has an online presence at <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/9116/>

The building dates mostly from the fifteenth century (though some parts of the building are some 200 years older): consisting of nave and south aisle, it has a stunning stained-glass window dated 1523 in the north wall and a large sixteenth century octagonal font. The building was extensively but sympathetically restored in 1869. The original five bells, cast in 1705 have been recast. A sixth bell and a new steel 'H' frame to support them were also added and dedicated in 1931. We have Bell Ringers from far and wide who come to ring them.



Important maintenance work on the pinnacles, tower and internal structures has been carried out over the past four years, so the general state of repair is good. We also rebuilt a 30 m length of the retaining churchyard west wall and capped a 6m length of south wall to protect it from the elements in 2024, which not only restored its integrity but enhances the setting of the church beautifully.

We keep the church open between 08:00 to 17:00 every day and there is a team that keep fresh flowers on the altars year-round, so there is always a warm and welcome atmosphere. There is a gloriously maintained churchyard, managed by a generous group of volunteers.



A substantial part of it is kept as a wildflower meadow throughout much of the year. There is an ancient Yew tree in its centre and a wildlife garden and trail to the north of the main churchyard, where new fruit trees have been planted and bird boxes erected. As a result, we have proudly achieved the Bronze Eco Award, which is something we would like to develop further. All the Altar frontals have also been sympathetically restored.

For the past seven years there has been a Eucharist service once a month on the third Sunday. However, we accept that there can, and must, be flexibility in this respect. In addition, there has been a tradition that All Hallows hosts a Crib Service early on Christmas Eve. This has been very well supported with a packed church and is something we would like to continue with.

A recent 'Vision' meeting did highlight some qualities that this parish would like any new priest to have: We are particularly looking for someone keen to carry out pastoral visits, to get involved in school and youth work, to be very visible and active in the community, to be able to develop unity and cooperation between parishes in the group and lead us in a variety of worship, teaching and preaching styles.



Brushford– St Mary the Virgin



St Mary the Virgin is a tiny Church remotely situated in picturesque surroundings high above the river Taw in the hamlet of Brushford. The origins of the present building are Norman. The unusual screen is thought to be the work of Breton craftsmen in 1520. The pulpit is Jacobean. The silver paten of 1470 and chalice of 1571 are used regularly for services. The small size of the Church allows a great sense of closeness to God in services which are held on the second Sunday in the month.

We seek a priest who will lead and teach us in worship while embracing our love of traditional services, respecting the history and individuality of this church and nurturing the bonds that have grown between our parishes. In return, we offer a peaceful and contemplative setting, a welcoming community and a congregation rooted in tradition yet open to exploring new forms of worship.



Dolton – St Edmunds



Dolton has a VA church primary school. The village is served by a well-stocked village store and post office, a traditional butcher and two public houses. There is also a garage/workshop and agricultural and animal feed merchants at Dolton Beacon, a mile out of the village. The nearest health centres and veterinary practice can be found in the towns of Great Torrington, Chulmleigh or Winkleigh.

Close by is Devon Wildlife's Halsdon Nature Reserve and Dolton is situated close to the Tarka Trail which is a popular 180-mile walking and cycling trail crossing North Devon and Exmoor and features the longest, traffic-free cycle route in the UK.



The Rectory in Dolton will be available to accommodate a curate and is a 1960s built, 4 bedroomed house about 200 metres from the church.



Village life, in general, is busy and neighbours are extremely supportive of each other. We have a very popular village hall, which is used regularly and frequently for weekly Coffee Mornings, Yoga, Arts and Craft group, Ballroom/Latin American Dancing, regular weekly Kickboxing plus many occasional groups, such as Ladies Phoenix Circle, Parish Council meetings, Quiz and Bingo evenings. There are also three Book Clubs, a Village Golf Society, the Annual Horticultural Show and a Carnival. Locally there is a thriving Community Rock Choir. We have regular village 'Big

Breakfasts' which are popular with the residents and are arranged by the Village Hall Committee.

Our Grade II* Listed parish church, dedicated to St Edmund, has been the centre of Dolton village life for 750 years and currently serves our village population of 600-700 residents. The church is kept open daily and it has been very important for us that we have kept weekly services going. We hope increasingly to use the newly developed area at the back of the church for more village social activities and fellowship.



The churchyard is maintained by our sexton and a small, but dedicated, group of people from the village who meet monthly (weather permitting) to tidy, weed, prune and sweep the pathways around the church.

We are ably served by our PCC. We are also pleased to advise that we are able to pay our Parish Share in full, each year. During our interregnum we have installed a new vestry and created an open area for social gathering as well as updating the heating system. The organ is listed in the National Pipe Organ Register and is regularly serviced and played and we also have an electronic keyboard to give us more flexibility. There is a team of bell ringers who regularly ring for Sunday services and other occasions.

In Dolton we have managed to maintain a weekly Sunday Morning Service: currently we are led by a visiting priest, one Sunday a month, for Holy Communion; on the other Sundays the morning service is led by members of our congregation. We take our turn hosting the other three churches in the benefice when there is a fifth Sunday in the month. We are open to expanding our range of services in the future.

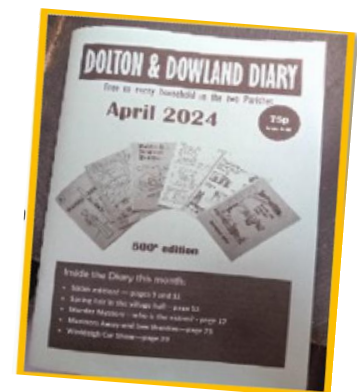
Every other Wednesday morning we hold either an Iona Morning Service or a contemplative service 'Breathing Space', both lay led. There is an annual All Souls Service, Harvest Festival, and a Remembrance Service at the War Memorial followed by a church service, and a very popular Christingle Service on Christmas Eve.



Members of our church attend the Baptist church's 'Songs of Praise' on First Sunday evenings and Baptist members also attend services at St. Edmund's. There are two separate House Meetings for bible study, prayer and fellowship, held on a weekly basis.

We have a good working relationship with the Voluntary Aided village primary school who hold weekly assemblies, and church members assist with SIAMS inspections. We would hope a new priest would integrate into the school life and be able to encourage young people and families into our church.

Details of all village events are published in our locally produced village magazine 'The Dolton & Dowland Diary' which is distributed to all households in the Parish free of charge. More details of village life can be accessed on the village Facebook page 'Dolton Dowland & surrounding areas' and our Benefice website is: www.doltonparishchurch.org





St. Edmund's has a stall at the Spring and Christmas Fairs. Other recent fundraising events include several concerts and a play 'The End of the Rainbow?' written and produced by members of the congregation and using the Noah story to illustrate Climate Change.

As a church, we also organize and regularly collect donations from the village residents and our own congregation for our local Food Bank.

We are looking for an energetic and enthusiastic new incumbent to take the church out into the wider community.



Dowland – St Peter's

St Peter's church, Dowland has stood for nearly 900 years, being built in 1132.

The beautiful stone building stands deep within the heart of the rural community in a parish with a population of 110.

This simple, strictly Protestant church displays delicate white walls, clear glass windows and medieval oak woodwork, which add to the 'stable' like atmosphere into which Jesus was born.

As well as the famous 15th century's pew ends, the wagon ceiling and the oak pillars, the building of St Peter's Church has a strong physical presence in the heart of the village being the only community building.

This 'jewel in the crown' is recognised for more than its beautiful building. The average attendance at the monthly service is 29 and growing! Several members of the congregation are young people under the age of 18; all the readers and participants that create the renowned 'carols by candlelight' Christmas service are the teenagers of the parish, making this is a truly unique yearly event which sees the church completely full.

Our bell tower captain is aged 17 and the youngest ever chairman of the Torridge Guild of Ringers. He is currently featuring in a documentary about his bellringing experience.

Three years ago, we created a rural children's group and with the input of a Primary school teacher who lives in the village, 'Peter's Patch' was born. Families come from far and wide to attend the themed sessions in the church and churchyard with an attendance of over 60 children with their parents and grandparents, the unique opportunity for Christian love and support is possible. What started out as children's play has developed into something much more. Everything is completely free of charge, making it accessible to all. The children grow vegetables, have put up bird boxes and bug hotels in the churchyard. God's presence is truly palpable within each session and this successful unique combination respects the 900

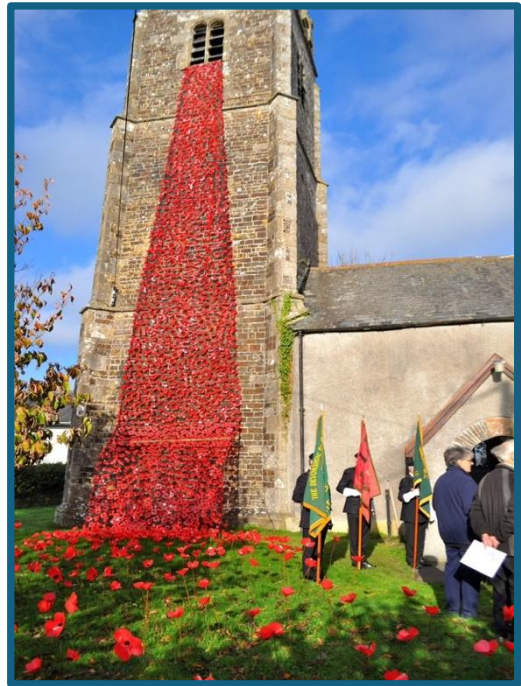


year history with a supportive modern day approach for people experiencing the struggles of day to day living with a young family in a rural community. The gentleness of Jesus Christ is truly at the heart of our Christian ethos and why Peter's Patch is so successful.

In 2018 we discovered that 3 young men did not return to Dowland after the end of World War One. As we had no record of these men, a group of local people in the parish built a war memorial which now stands in pride of place in the churchyard. It has been officially recognised by the Imperial War museum and the Flanders field project. To commemorate the men, we held a unique event where over 6 thousand red flowers cascaded down the tower and adorned the inside of the church.

The event attracted the attention of the BBC with both local and national media coverage.

Each year since then the Veterans of the Devon Regiment come with their Standards to our Act of Remembrance service. We consider ourselves incredibly fortunate that they choose to come every year to one of the smallest parishes in Devon.



Every other year we create an event to fundraise for chosen charities as we believe that coming together as a community to give generously of our time and money is at the heart of Christian life. The events have ranged from displays such as 'The Wedding Dresses of Dowland Brides' to the making of a handmade meadow.

This event featured thousands of handmade flowers and flowed seamlessly around the church from season to season. This month-long event supported the charity Papyrus (prevention of young suicide) and 2 of our PCC members continue to be ambassadors of this charity today. This display also went on tour and we were asked to take it to the Devon County Show in 2025!



Plans are underway for the 2027 event where everyone's contribution is welcomed.



The older generation enjoy the chance to participate in all aspects of church life and are highly valued for their knowledge and dedication to St Peter's.

The church here has been supporting families for generations and it is our privilege with the valuable input from both the older generation and the younger members of our community to be able to provide a meaningful Christian voice into the future. We successfully 'think outside of the box' with ways to grow and by involving the young generation to contribute is a vital route to the successful future of our Church.

The monthly services are an important part of the life of Dowland with much pastoral care happening afterwards in the sharing of refreshments. They form part of the variety of activities that St Peter's has to offer with something for everyone to get involved in.

As the number of people of all ages who are in some way involved with the life of St Peter's continues to grow, it is

a vibrant, healthy and happy church that is dedicated to the community and future generations in the parish.

Iddesleigh – St James



Iddesleigh is a small, friendly rural parish of around 200 people in the heart of Devon. Its strong community spirit is closely connected to St James' Church, which plays a central role in village life. St James is a Grade 1 listed 15th-century church, beautifully situated overlooking Dartmoor. It has significant architectural and historical interest, including intricate roof bosses - one depicting the three hares - and an effigy of a crusader, probably a member of the Sully family. Its Magna Carta heritage has been celebrated through historic enactments and children's activities. The church is open daily for prayer and reflection.

Sunday attendance averages around 20 adults, with a growing number of children and grandchildren. Currently one service of Holy Communion is held, while previously three services took place each month, of which at least one was Holy Communion. The congregation shares in readings, intercessions and occasional lay-led services, using both the Book of Common Prayer and Common Worship, with hymns from Mission Praise. A shared organist now leads the music. During Covid, a Benefice-wide Skype group strengthened prayer and fellowship. Music is supported by a shared organist, while neighbouring churches join monthly benefice services during the current interregnum. Strong links with the Methodist Church include Covenant Services and other joint events. Services are important occasions for fellowship, often followed by refreshments, and bell ringers support some services and hold an annual festival.

Special services such as Mothering Sunday, Easter, Harvest and the Carol Service can attract up to 100 people. The nearby Village Hall supports church and community events including Harvest Suppers, Church Teas, Christmas Fairs and wedding breakfasts. The church encourages safeguarding-aware family involvement and activities include Christingle, Messy Church, Palm Sunday processions (with donkeys) and Songs of Praise on the village green. The

Candlelit Nine Lessons and Carols is a particular highlight, involving parish children and followed by mince pies with clotted cream.



Finances are sound, with fundraising supporting maintenance and improvements. Notable events include All Around the Year, a concert by the Iddesleigh Quartet, Claire and Michael Morpurgo, and Carol Hughes. Local charity collections benefit North Devon Hospice and Save the Children. Regular attendees continue to support the church, with parishioners helping with upkeep as able.

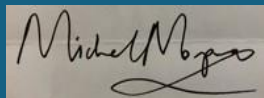
Iddesleigh also has one of only two remaining in Friendly Societies in Devon, whose annual Club Day includes a parade, church service, a lunch provided by the Duke of York Inn. sports and a village tea. The parish attracts visitors through its connections with Michael Morpurgo's War Horse, the Tarka Trail and Parson Jack Russell, who served as curate at St James. The charity Farms for City Children is based locally and visitors often explore the church and village hall, which features a War Horse painting and a permanent exhibition of photographs by renowned local photographer James Ravilious, documenting the enduring rural life of the area.



Iddesleigh is deep down Devon lanes but its welcome and outreach is great, it can reasonably claim to be an example of an active and caring rural parish. As our new vicar we seek a gentle soul with grace, empathy and a sunny disposition who is open to different styles of worship, active in caring for our church family and making links within the community.

We have lived in Iddesleigh for nigh on 50 years. Church, pub, 80 souls in the village. Village Hall, Village Green, far from anywhere, yet the centre of our world. Known all around as the friendly village, it is a community that has always looked after each other. The church and chapel are the beating hearts of the community, have been for centuries. Do come and see us. You'll be assured of a warm welcome.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored rectangular background. The signature is cursive and reads "Michael Morpurgo".

Michael Morpurgo

Monkokehampton – All Saints



Monkokehampton lies in a very rural area of mid Devon between Okehampton, Hatherleigh and Winkleigh. This small community consists of a group of old cottages in the centre with some newer bungalows on the periphery with an adult population of approximately 150. The surrounding land, some of which has been farmed by the same family for generations, still continues to be productive and farmed in similar ways. We are a small village with the church and hall events at the heart of it.

Our neighbouring village of Exbourne has a Church of England Primary School but most Primary school children are bussed to Hatherleigh Community Primary and secondary scholars to Okehampton Community College.



“As members of Iddesleigh Methodist church we have been joining All Saints for their 3rd Sunday services and play for the hymns which we enjoy doing and we appreciate the welcoming, warmth and fellowship”

There are 12 members on the Church Electoral Roll. At the moment we hold services on a monthly basis on the third Sunday of the month which can take the form of Holy Communion, All Age service or Morning Prayer. We have a regular attendance for services averaging 18 adults plus family and youths under 25 joining for friendly, welcoming and relaxed fellowship.

We work closely with Iddesleigh Methodist Chapel who don't hold a service on 3rd Sunday and attend our church, 2 members join us to provide music with guitar and recorder to help lead our hymns. We all enjoy singing and invite parishioners to choose their favourite hymns for a Songs of Praise evening.

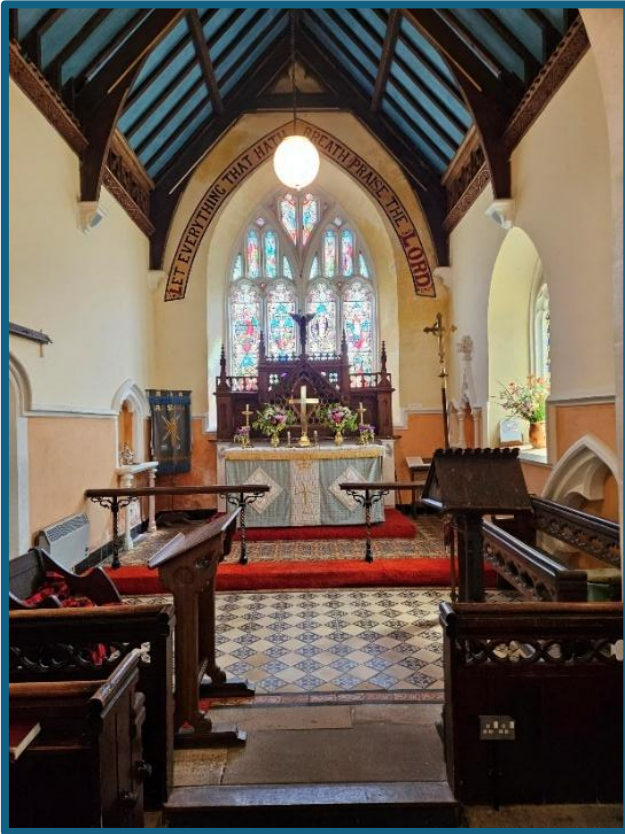
Some of our teenagers attend Stowford Camp an ecumenical youth ministry weekend for fellowship and fun. Our Christmas carol service last year was well supported with 70 attending; we asked members of our village community to read some of the lessons and join us for our traditional service and fellowship. Harvest Festival is always well supported averaging 48 attendance and providing lunch afterwards in the Old Schoolroom to boost our church funds.

July saw our first Open Weekend, culminating in our Annual Cream Tea, welcoming the community to explore the church, its beautiful stained-glass windows, records and artefacts and discover more about its history and that of the village. Our annual Cream Tea, Big Breakfast and joint Coffee Morning with the Old Schoolroom Committee are also well-supported fundraising events, attracting residents from the village and surrounding area.

Our church, All Saints, is a welcoming community church used for marriages, baptisms and

funerals. Rebuilt in 1855 after a disastrous fire, the Victorian church retains its 14th-century tower, which houses four bells, three medieval, chimed only for services. The small church seats just under 100 and comprises a single aisle, chancel and nave. Its colourful east window was exhibited at the 1851 Great Exhibition before being installed here.





The churchyard, still used for burials is well maintained by volunteers including younger members of the village, there is a public footpath running through it. In 2020 we completed the major restoration to the listed Lych gate which is a statement structure at the entrance to the churchyard.

The Old Schoolroom next to the church is our community centre for various events. The community engages with the church to hold a service for any national celebrations, like The Coronation. There is a Ladies Group who meet monthly and four yoga sessions a week in the hall. The community supports village events like coffee mornings, family bingo, cream teas, fun days and village walks whether they are hosted by the church or hall committee, they are the central social hub for our village.



Winkleigh – All Saints



All Saints parish church, Winkleigh, is a mediaeval foundation, the list of incumbents dating from 1202. The early mediaeval church was largely rebuilt in the fifteenth century, and enlarged and restored in the nineteenth century.

In common with many other Devon parishes, Winkleigh parish was strongly influenced by the Oxford movement in the nineteenth century, and the parish has retained a Eucharist focused style of worship since then. Currently, the Eucharist is celebrated on three Sundays a month, a lay-led Morning Prayer service taking place once a month and a joint service rotates around the parishes on fifth Sundays. Until the current inter-regnum, there were regular mid-week said Eucharist services on Wednesdays. In addition to the regular services, there are additional celebrations of Eucharist on Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, the Easter Vigil, Ascension Day, Corpus Christi, the Christmas Vigil and Christmas Day. Special (non-eucharist) services are held on Remembrance Sunday and All Souls Day, and a Crib service on Christmas Eve, with Stations of the Cross and Compline in Holy Week. Lectures by the parish priest and members of the congregation take place during Lent, and Bible study groups meet at various times during the year.

The church also hosts the local school's Nativity service, art exhibitions, and provides activity sessions for children during the school holidays.

Members of the congregation take on all the usual tasks to ensure smooth running of the services and we have excellent flower arrangers and a full team of ringers for our 8 bells. The Church and churchyard are well maintained, with some 'rewilding' going on in the churchyard this year. We are fortunate in having the services of an organist on a regular basis. The PCC comprises the two church wardens (one of whom is also the parish safeguarding officer and the other is the tower captain), the secretary, the treasurer (ex officio member), and three other

members. The parish finances are in good order, with the parish regularly meeting its Common Fund contribution.

We are looking for a priest who will maintain the Eucharist-focused tradition of our parish, including our mid-week said Eucharist services. We also hope that he or she will help us to develop our congregation, and in particular to recruit younger people into the fold, and to engage in the social life of the village.



Winkleigh Village

The population of Winkleigh was 2,036 in 2024, with a further, as yet unquantified, increase in the last two years following housing developments on the village outskirts.

The central village square, adjacent to the churchyard, includes private houses, a butcher, grocery/general store, Post Office, beauty salon, café and two pubs. Other village facilities include a doctors' surgery, hairdresser, florist/coffee shop, garage, cider factory with café and veterinary practice. Several farms and a farm shop surround the village.

The well-equipped village primary school offers sports and outdoor activities, together with a nursery, breakfast club and after-school clubs. It has consistently been rated "Good" by OFSTED since 2013.

Community life is supported by the Village Hall, a Community Centre and a Sports Centre, which host a wide range of activities. There are regular weekly and monthly markets, a Christmas fair and a summer fair whose origin is amongst the oldest in the country.

Winkleigh is within easy driving distance of Barnstaple, Exeter, Crediton and Okehampton. A bus service runs between Barnstaple and Exeter via Winkleigh. The Tarka Line railway connects Exeter and Barnstaple, with the nearest station at Eggesford, five miles away.

Testimonial – The Very Reverend Graham Smith

Living in retirement in one of the eight villages covered by this appointment I have had direct ministerial involvement in the life of these churches. This has been through one year as interim minister for the Winkleigh group and taking services in both groups for the past eight years. During this time the people have received me graciously and showed me how to engage in best practice rural ministry, and I look back on it with pleasure and appreciation.

The work of the new priest will inevitably focus on three ongoing areas of development:

First, the Sunday service (mainly the Eucharist) has been the principal opportunity to celebrate our life together and provide the basis for wider ministry in the villages. It also serves as the ‘shop window’ to engage those on the fringes of church life.

Second, Visiting. The new priest should enjoy visits to homes, schools, farms, places of work and to listen, learn and encourage people in their daily lives. This builds on existing connections through the congregations so that visiting becomes a ministry shared with lay people. There is a clear desire both from the congregations and from the wider community that their priest should be visible and active in the life of the villages.

Third, a highlight of the work will be bringing together two groups of four rural parishes to grow together not least by celebrating areas of specialism that any parish can offer. ‘Better together’ sums this up well.

Having developed experience and expertise through an interregnum, all eight parishes are well served by their churchwardens and other officers who eagerly look forward to a fruitful partnership with their new priest. The prospects for this are good.

All together, there is sufficient variety and opportunity for the new priest to thrive and take pleasure in working with a new group of faithful congregations.



Graham Smith

Former Dean of Norwich

Appendices

A) Benefice Fact Sheet

DISTANCES IN MILES

Destination	From Winkleigh	From Dolton
Ashreigney	5.0	4.8
Broadwoodkelly	2.6	8.8
Brushford	3.3	9.7
Dowland	2.0	1.5
Iddesleigh	2.6	2.8
Monkokehampton	4.5	5.3
Winkleigh	—	2.2
Dolton	2.2	—

DISTANCES TO LOCAL TOWNS

Town	From Winkleigh	From Dolton
Barnstaple	17	16
Crediton	18	21
Exeter	26	28
Okehampton	13	15
Plymouth	45	44
Torrington	11	9.3

SCHOOL – PRIMARY / SECONDARY / 6TH FORM / OFSTED RATINGS

Area	School / Stage	Rating & Performance
Winkleigh	Primary	Winkleigh – Good
	Secondary	Chulmleigh – Good Top 3 in Devon / Top 20 nationally - 61% Grade 5+ at GCSE
	6th Form	Exeter – Outstanding Okehampton – Needs attention
Dolton - Including Dowland	Primary	Dolton – Good
	Secondary	Torrington – Good 15th in Devon / 2,000th nationally - 35% Grade 5+ at GCSE
	6th Form	Bideford – Good Petroc – Requires improvement
Monkokehampton	Primary	Hatherleigh – Good

Winkleigh catchment includes Ashreigney, Broadwoodkelly, Brushford and Iddesleigh

B) Service Schedule: Current Pattern of Services

Church	Current Sunday Service Pattern
ST JAMES, ASHREIGNEY	Eucharist twice a month , 11am
ALL HALLOWS, BROADWOODKELLY	Holy Communion once a month , 11am
ST MARY THE VIRGIN, BRUSHFORD	Sunday service once a month , alternating Eucharist and Evensong
ST EDMUNDS, DOLTON	Weekly Sunday service ; Holy Communion once a month, other weeks lay-led
ST PETER'S, DOWLAND	Once a month , alternating Holy Communion and Family Service
ST JAMES, IDDESLEIGH	Holy Communion once a month , 10am
ALL SAINTS, MONKKEHAMPTON	Once a month , rotating Holy Communion, All Age Service and Morning Prayer, 10am
ALL SAINTS, WINKLEIGH	Eucharist three times a month ; lay-led Morning Prayer once a month

Additional worship: Several churches also hold priest-led seasonal and special services, including Harvest, Remembrance, Carol, All Souls, Christingle, Holy Week and Easter services. Fifth Sundays are often used for joint services across the benefices.

The eight churches offer considerable flexibility in their patterns of worship, and we value the different traditions and arrangements that have developed in each, as well as the commitment that has sustained these services during interregnum. As we look ahead, we are open to reviewing these rather than assuming existing patterns must remain unchanged. With the Rector normally able to celebrate Holy Communion at two churches on a Sunday, a fair and sustainable rota could provide regular Eucharistic worship across all eight churches, while retaining valued lay-led and alternative forms of worship. Fifth Sundays offer further opportunities for joint worship and fellowship across the benefices.

C) Map of Parishes.

