



The Ross Parishes are seeking a **RECTOR**

in the Ross and Archenfield Deanery,
Hereford Archdeaconry,
Diocese of Hereford

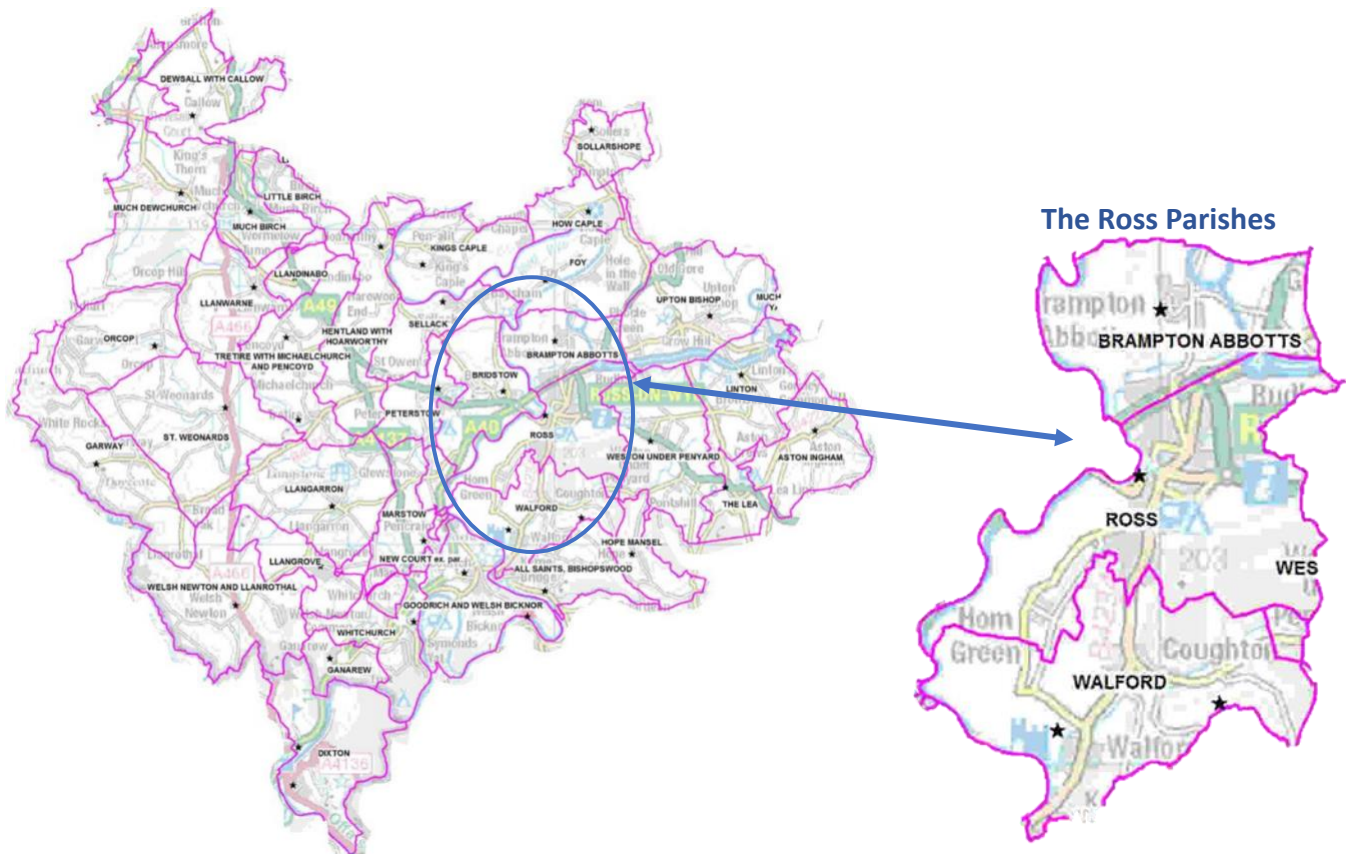
**Parish Profile and Role Descriptor
Summer 2024**



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Ross and Archenfield Deanery



Introduction from the Wardens of the Ross Parishes

Welcome to this information pack. Thank you for your interest in us and in this role.

We are very excited about the direction of travel for our benefice and the people who might journey with us next - in this crucial role of Rector, and in others.

The post of Rector would suit a creative, mission-hearted, energetic and prayerful priest who is committed to working with and building the local community, enjoys working collaboratively and has a passion for intergenerational mission and ministry in a semi-rural setting.

It is a really exciting opportunity, our congregations are growing, the average age is falling, there is much good will and many people to share the load. The more we grow the more we become attractive to others. We have an experienced ministry team and hope you might feel called to come and take over leading it.

We hope to inspire you to explore whether God might be calling you to ministry here among and with us as our Rector.

We are advertising this post at the same time as advertising a new full time LifeLink Chaplaincy post working in our local secondary school, the Ross Parishes, and our deanery. This is part of a wider project linking school, church and home life to inspire and grow faith, hope and love among young people and families in our parishes and deanery. The LifeLink Chaplain role is a salaried post open to suitably qualified lay or ordained candidates. These two posts might be attractive to a couple. We are open to being flexible, please try us!

Before long, we will also be advertising for a House for Duty priest to share the journey.

What these three posts have in common is our deeply and long-held 2020 Vision to “grow inclusive, intergenerational churches” in the Ross Parishes with a mission “to inspire faith, hope and love in the lives of people of all ages and backgrounds in Ross-on-Wye and the villages around us”. Working with us, these three new postholders will help us take new strides in taking this vision and mission forward.

So, this is a time of change, it is also a very exciting time to be exploring joining us.

We hope you want to find out more. Please do get in touch if you would like to talk with us or explore further.

You will find the contact details you need at:

<https://rossparishes.uk/recruitment>

The Wardens of the Ross Parishes

Mark Sanderson, Bryan Jones,
Gay Chinn, Murray Alston




The Right Reverend Richard Jackson, Bishop of Hereford writes:

Welcome to the Diocese of Hereford! We may be the smallest mainland diocese in the Church of England, but we think small is beautiful. It means you can know your colleagues and be known and we hope supported to exercise your best ministry. We believe the local is the best place to discern God's call. Our parishes and benefices are the centre of the diocese not the Diocesan office. Our diocesan strategy seeks to unite us around a common purpose of 'Proclaiming Christ and Growing disciples' lived out in three values of Prayerfulness, Christlikeness and Engagement. We recognise our parishes and clergy are diverse and we encourage people to live out these things in line with their own giftings, individual and communal.



We have just started a rolling programme to help embed the values in our churches. 2023 was a year of prayer, with events around the diocese, including communion services on the hills covering every deanery, exploring prayer workshops and more intense times of prayer for our common life. 2024 is a year of faith, seeking to grow our discipleship, and 2025 will be a year of outward looking engagement with our communities. The senior staff seek to model these values and join with parishes in activities to deepen our spiritual life.

I hope you will feel led to join us in this beautiful corner of God's creation, in particular to consider the Benefice of Ross, Walford and Brampton Abbots. It is a place of great potential, gifted people and excellent community relationships. May you know God's wisdom as you prayerfully consider this opportunity.

Every blessing 

The Venerable Derek Chedzey, Archdeacon of Hereford writes:

Thank you for your interest in the post of Rector of Ross, Walford and Brampton Abbots. This is an exciting opportunity in a vibrant and friendly Benefice for the right person. We are looking for someone who can inhabit the range of Anglican worship found in one of our largest and most significant Market Towns, and who can work in a genuine collaborative spirit with clergy and lay colleagues and can love people before trying to change them. We need someone with a heart for mission and who longs to see young and old come to living faith in Jesus Christ and be supported on their journey of faith. A great deal of prayer, thought and planning has gone into the preparation of this profile. It provides an outline of the role, the skills and experience that we and the parishes are looking for.



This is an exciting time to join in the work of the Benefice, and our Diocese. As Rector you will have strategic and pastoral oversight for the communities and churches that make up the benefice. The person appointed will be expected to work with the Rural Dean, Deanery Leadership Team and Archdeacon to explore the possibilities for fresh thinking across the deanery.

There is considerable potential for growth and a willingness to engage in intergenerational mission across these parishes. As a Diocese we are committed to spiritual and numerical growth, growing Christians of all ages. We see parish ministry as the centre of the Diocese and are seeking to ensure all our clergy are well supported and cared for so they can minister fruitfully.

A warm welcome awaits the right person. We look forward to working with you to inspire new generations, proclaim the Gospel and develop disciples.

The Revd Sheila Anthony, Rural Dean of Ross and Archenfield Deanery writes:

Ross and Archenfield deanery is situated in a beautiful part of the country. We are a small deanery of seven benefices which encompasses the market town of Ross-on-Wye and many small villages covering a large area.

You will be joining us at an exciting phase as Hereford Diocese is currently looking at a new strategy and, in this deanery, we are also focussing upon pastoral reorganisation. There are new clergy replacements in the deanery too, one due to retirement and this one because the last Rector of the Ross Parishes is now the Bishop of Cyprus and the Gulf.



There is a warm welcome waiting for all our new colleagues, and we very much look forward to working together in these exciting times. We are fortunate to be supported by many retired clergy, we are also fully committed to equipping and enabling lay ministry to all ages, young and old, with the aim of helping everyone to encounter the love of Jesus.

We are also appointing a secondary school LifeLink Chaplain with the intention of increasing our ministry and connection to young people, their families and schools with the local churches. The appointment of a part time Associate Priest in Ross Parishes is another important post to be filled in due course.

Most importantly, the parishes now need a Rector and we hope and pray that, with God's leading, the right candidate will join us. If you are that person we very much look forward to working with you in this next phase of the exciting mission in the Ross Parishes and the Deanery.



Growing an inclusive, intergenerational, church

Vision and Mission in the Ross Parishes

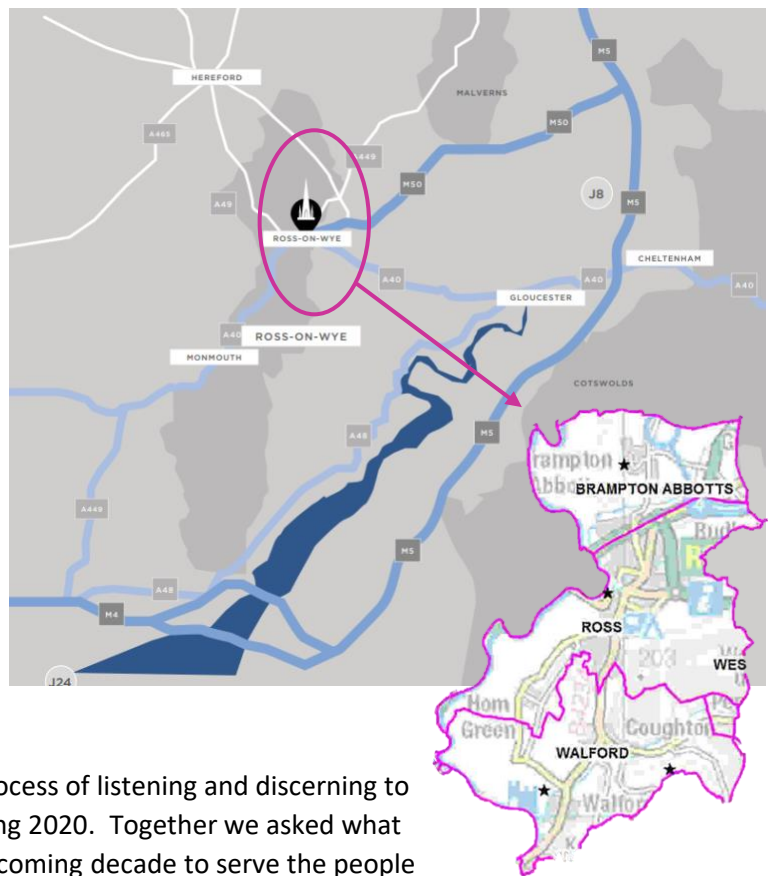
The Ross Parishes – our context

We are currently a benefice of three parishes – made up of a market town and two rural villages linked closely.

The spire of St Mary’s Church, Ross-on-Wye can be seen for miles and Ross itself is looked to for shopping and services including a community hospital, four primary schools and one large secondary school so it is a natural centre for local people of all ages.

The benefice population is currently approximately 14,000 and growing – nearly 50% of the population of the Ross and Archenfield Deanery.

We are set in a National Landscape (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) and attract many tourists visiting the Wye Valley. But we also have a very mixed demographic.



Shaping Mission and Ministry in the Ross Parishes

Our 2020 vision and mission...

Our current vision and mission flowed out of a process of listening and discerning to renew our vision and calling in autumn 2019/spring 2020. Together we asked what we heard God calling us to be and to do over the coming decade to serve the people of the parishes entrusted to us.

Out of it came a strong sense of a continued and strengthened call from God to be passing on faith in Jesus Christ to people of all ages and backgrounds in and around Ross-on-Wye, inspiring faith, hope and love in local people and communities. We saw an exciting vision of growing intergenerational and inclusive churches where people of all ages and backgrounds could find a welcome and a home.

This 2020 Vision, encapsulated as “Growing as an Inclusive, Intergenerational Church among people of all ages and backgrounds” and our Mission of “Inspiring Faith, Hope and Love among the people of the Ross Parishes and beyond” now shapes our mission, ministry, decision making and planning as parishes. We have continued to hold annual spring vision days as a focus for giving thanks and renewal as we seek to continue to listen to God together and adjust our spiritual compasses for the new year ahead.

Implementing our 2020 vision and mission

To implement our 2020 vision and mission we shaped our mission and ministry, planning and reporting around our key priorities. These broadly map against the Five Marks of Mission and growing intergenerationally and inclusively.

Each priority has at least one lay leader holding that portfolio as a member of St Mary's PCC, working in collaboration with the other PCCs.

Inspiring Faith Mark of Mission 1: Proclaiming the good news of God's kingdom (TELL) Mark of Mission 2: Teach, nurture and baptise new believers (TEACH)

This priority covers inspiring and nurturing faith among people of all ages and backgrounds. We know that for many people today the journey to and in faith is made up of many little steps, including points of first connection, opportunities to explore, to respond, and to grow in faith lifelong.

This wide portfolio covers the many connecting points that we have in our community including Toast and Toddle, Craft Groups, Christmas tree festivals, concerts, civic events, national events and more, as well as our important Life Events ministry of Christenings, Weddings and Funerals. We are proactive about offering opportunities to explore faith, such as: Paddle and Praise, Messy Church; The Youth Choir; Primary School work with assemblies and 3 Open the Book Teams, Experience Easter, Alpha and other explorers courses. We regularly offer the opportunity for confirmation and a rich programme of Bible Study, Book Groups, Lent courses, Prayer Groups, the GROW Youth Group for teens, workshops, camps, retreats, and more.

Inspiring Hope Mark of Mission 3: To respond to human need by loving service (TEND)

This priority is about care, but also about offering hope in troubled times when so many people of all ages are under many pressures. We seek to engage with our communities in an outward facing way and build strong relationships in the community and with civic structures, for the common good. This includes our extensive ministries of Pastoral Care; bereavement ministry; the Ross Community Larder in St Mary's Hall; Warm Spaces; Collaboration with the Ross Community Development Trust, the RBL, Ross Hospital Chaplaincy; becoming a Dementia Friendly Church; prayer groups/chains; our extensive ministry in residential and care homes.

Inspiring Love Mark of Mission 4: To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation (TRANSFORM) and Mark of Mission 5: To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the of the earth (TREASURE)

We have made great strides in becoming an Eco Church with a Silver Award and making links with local environmental charities such as EnviroAbility, to take common action for good. St Mary's is a Fairtrade Church. We have a branch of the Ross Mothers' Union with its practical and campaigning emphasis on justice, peace and combatting violence. We have many opportunities for collaboration with our primary schools and John Kyrle High School inspired by the Ross philanthropist John Kyrle (whose 300th anniversary is this year).

Our next steps...

1 Growing an Intergenerational Church We are encouraged that our many linked approaches to connecting with local people of all ages and backgrounds is starting to bear real fruit, and now we need to build on that. The LifeLink Chaplaincy Project and this post will help us pioneer new approaches to inspiring faith, hope and love through connecting school + church + homelife/community in our market town and rural parish settings.



2 Growing an Inclusive Church... We are an Inclusive Church, and this is very important to us. We welcome all, irrespective of gender, sexuality, ability, intelligence or background. This year we are working on widening and strengthening our welcome and inclusion as parishes. As part of this all three PCCs welcome the opportunity to offer Prayers of Love and Faith in the Ross Benefice.



The Ross Parishes belong to the diocesan and national Inclusive Church Networks.

Ross Parish

Ross Parish and the people who live here

St Mary’s Church is the one Anglican church in Ross-on-Wye and uniquely positioned to serve the people of the town. Its landmark spire has stood for centuries at the heart of the community serving as a beacon of faith, hope and love in the town.



Parish Census and deprivation summary

Parish population (2021): 10462

	Parish	Diocese	National
% aged 0-19	20%	20%	23%
% aged 20-44	26%	25%	33%
% aged 45-69	34%	36%	31%
% aged 70 & over	21%	20%	14%
% Christian	53%	55%	46%
% non-Christian religion	2%	2%	11%

Parish deprivation rank (IMD 2019): 5057

(1=most deprived parish in the Church of England, 12,239=least deprived)

For more detailed census & deprivation info: see <http://arcg.is/IRaS4CS>
<https://www.churchofengland.org/researchandstats> and
<http://www2.cuf.org.uk/poverty-england/poverty-map>

Number of churches in parish (2024): 1

Parish Code: 180244

There is a close and strong relationship between St Mary’s Church and our town of Ross which we have been developing as a priority over recent years and for an increasing number of people and groups, St Mary’s is now seen as a natural place to be.

The population is increasingly diverse as expansion brings people attracted to the Border area from further afield. Two big population groups are the long term ‘Ross-ians’ with a strong sense of local history and culture, and (increasingly ageing) retirees who have arrived in the past twenty years. Younger incoming families are taking advantage of the varied local employment opportunities, increasingly work from home or commute to Hereford, Gloucester and wider afield. Local farms employ large numbers of seasonal workers and some EU citizens have made Ross home. There is a strong sense of community with many community facilities and opportunities including the Community Hub, Community Garden, rowing and sports clubs, music and drama, uniformed organisations. The two doctors surgeries, community hospital and associated welfare organisations are important supporters of town and village life.

The town community larder is housed in the basement of St Mary’s Hall, just across from the church. There are many users of all ages and backgrounds. We also offer a Warm Space through the winter in the hall and Tea and Toast. We have built good links with the Ross Community Development Trust. One of our clergy team is Chaplain to Retail and Industry in the town. We also exercise other Chaplaincy roles – to the Sea Cadets, the RBL, and more organisations would like to have Chaplains if we had the capacity. We highly value our opportunity to inspire

faith, hope and love in the schools in the town – see the section for more on our growing schools ministry and chaplaincy.

St Mary's is the Civic Church of the town and hosts services for Ross Town Council, the annual Remembrance Service, and occasionally Herefordshire Council. It is set aside as a church for services of national significance, and has thus hosted services at times of national mourning and celebration such as the death of the late Queen, and the Coronation of the King. But on a day-to-day basis St Mary's is a place of faith, hope and love – and our desire is for all ages and backgrounds to find here a welcome and a home. Sometimes the church will be buzzing with toddlers or teens, adult craft groups, Messy Church or school visits and worship. Sometimes local people will be marking significant life events with weddings, christenings or funerals - we are there for the “ow” and the “wow” moments in life and our bereavement group and dementia friendly church offer support to many. Sometimes the church will be empty and will echo with the silent prayer of centuries, inviting visitors to prayer today. There is a daily rota of welcomers and our visitor's book is testament to the wonder and love people experience from spending time in St Mary's.

The Rector of Ross with a small team volunteer team has conducted regular ward rounds and offers pastoral care to patients and staff of the town's Community Hospital. Recently the NHS has appointed a dedicated chaplain to work across a number of local community hospitals including Ross and we hope to work with them. We value being able to offer support to local people and people from the surrounding area at times of need. Through our local pastoral visiting team Holy Communion and pastoral care are also offered to those who cannot attend church.

The worshipping community life of St Mary's

The sympathetic and imaginative reordering of the building, completed in 2021, has resulted in a church that has the best of both: historic architecture and modern conveniences. St Mary's has superb heating, lighting, and sound; an unobtrusive projector and screen, kitchen area and toilets, and well equipped children's resource room. It is accessible and the seating allows for creative use of the nave. This means that St Mary's has become a sought after venue for concerts, book launches, drama, exhibitions, school visits and much more but most importantly it is a highly functional building for worship.



The [principal service](#) on a Sunday is a Common Worship Sung Eucharist at 9.30am. The first Sunday of each month Intergenerational Eucharist is hovering around an attendance of 100. In addition we have a committed and regular small congregation joining us live online (also later in the week) through our streaming of this service. A lively workshop “Sunday Kids” is held each week for young children, in the children's room at the back of church – they are just far enough away to be unobtrusive but loud enough to know they are there and having fun, as the service progresses. Our youth choir joins the adult choir on the first and third Sundays of the month and greatly enhances our worship.



Each Sunday there is also an 8am said Eucharist, and for several months a year there is [Choral Evensong](#) (during the summer months this is taken “out & about” around the deanery and beyond). St Mary's is well known for its excellent choir, musical director and organist. Over the last couple of years we've held a successful series of late afternoon seminars in St Mary's while the choir is “out and about”, currently [Faith @ Five](#).

A midweek Eucharist is held on Thursday mornings and a monthly Messy Church on Thursday afternoons. Daily morning prayer takes place on Zoom with a strong congregation who share in leading. There are regular prayer groups which meet online and in person, as do several Bible study groups. St Mary's also hosts Just B, our bereavement support group and we are a dementia friendly church.

Festivals are important to us, they are an opportunity to connect with people across our town and villages when everyone is celebrating together. We try to ensure that we offer a variety of ways to reach people of different ages and backgrounds. We celebrate [Christmas](#) in style where congregations now exceed pre-Covid levels with (in 2023) nearly 300 people attending the traditional carol service, 344 for the Crib Service on Christmas Eve and 240 people came to *Carols Under the Spire*, out in the churchyard and an atmospheric Midnight Mass. Every other year we hold a [Christmas Tree Festival](#), in 2023 over 80 town organisations entered and decorated a tree. Our schools and organisations, such as, Beavers and RBL enjoy their carol services.

We are growing intergenerationally Our work with young people and families is starting to rebalance our demographic to become more truly intergenerational. Opportunities include Toast and Toddle, Messy Church (including Messy Vintage), our Youth Choir, and a fortnightly craft adult group. Discipling of young people is offered through our Grow Youth Group and Explore Confirmation group. It is a delight to see the generations mixing and valuing each other. We also provide chaplaincy to our largest, dementia focused residential home where we have a communion service and 'big' service each month, and monthly services for another smaller home and three sheltered housing complexes. A recent staffing change at Westbank Home means that small numbers of residents can now join Sunday intergenerational services at St Mary's twice each month, also at Messy Church. On other occasions they join in with our weekly streamed 9.30 service.



We are growing as an inclusive church The Ross benefice is a registered [Inclusive Church](#). We believe in being churches that welcome and serve all people in the name of Jesus Christ; that interpret the Bible inclusively and that do not discriminate against people on grounds of economic power, gender, mental health, physical ability, ethnicity, nationality, race, age, marital status or sexuality. We have a long-standing tradition of caring excellence – we do things to the best of our ability to express our devotion to God, but with patience and kindness. We try hard to involve all those who need to take next steps, in the running of the church; our PCC is growing and the number of people involved in running an average 9.30 Sunday service is usually upwards of thirty.

Life Events Ministry Life Events – christenings, wedding and funerals - are important to us. Canon Sandra Millar, formerly Church of England Life Events lead, has been inspirational in guiding the development of our thinking and practice, and continues to support our life events and intergenerational development. St Mary's has a significant number of christenings, weddings, and funerals each year as would be expected of a market town church, and it has a reputation for doing such services well. At life-changing times and beyond, we are there for all local people with the comfort, hope, and joy of Christ.

St Mary's is a building at the heart of the community Since the reordering of the building we have worked hard through many partner organisations and businesses, not least [the Friends of St Mary's](#), to use the church building imaginatively for secular purposes. Events take place frequently, drawing both locals and visitors into the church. See our weekly newsletter and especially the monthly events mailing for current details <https://rossparishes.uk/newsletters/>

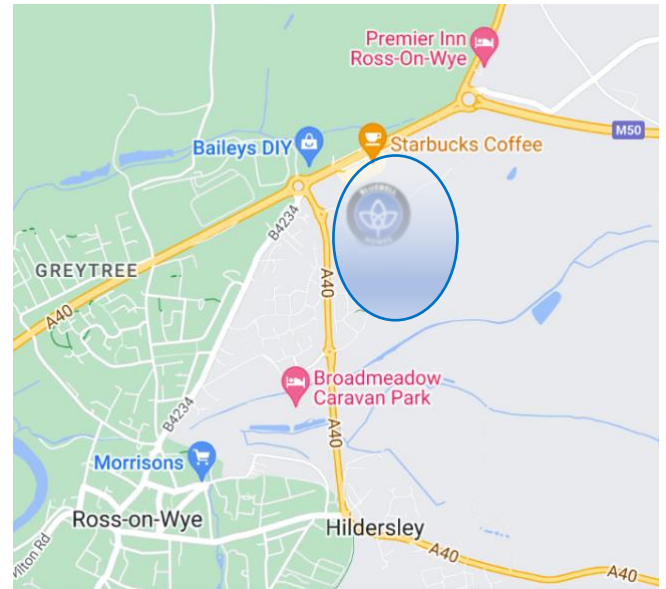
Ecumenical Relations and Churches Together in Ross and District

We greatly value working with colleagues from other churches in the town. St Mary's plays a full (and growing) part in the life of Churches Together in Ross and District. CTRD acknowledges that by working together "as one body" we can achieve far more than any single congregation and we can share resources and best practice. As the largest church building in the town, St Mary's naturally, but not always, hosts CTRD events and services and we are pleased to do so. We host the ecumenical Ross Community Larder in St Mary's Hall. We are working with the ecumenical team that mentors students in John Kyrle High School and we are working together to develop chaplaincy in the school too. Another recent venture is to develop a group of street pastors, following a model in use in Hereford City, to support people in the town on Saturday evenings. <https://www.ctrd.org.uk>



St Mary's Garden Village

St Mary's Garden Village is a large new development just outside the Ross ring road. It was started the year before Covid and designed as an intergenerational community. The housing sizes and types are mixed throughout the estate with bungalows, terraced and detached houses built to attract and mix a range of ages and sizes of household. There is also a mix of social and owner-occupied housing. A small community hub building has recently been completed with a children's play area and small raised bed "allotment" plots. There are cycle and walking routes and an outdoor gym area and also a wetlands and a "boathouse" venue for events.



The naming and branding of St Mary's Garden Village gives a natural connection between the SMGV housing development and St Mary's Church – the church spire can be seen from many parts of the development and the village formal gardens have their own "mini-spire" sculpture echoing St Mary's.

A number of residents are now part of the life of St Mary's church but it has also been our hope to offer some community opportunities at St Mary's Garden Village in collaboration with residents - such as coffee and chat, Messy Church pop up, Café church pop up, Toast and Toddle etc. Now that the Village Hub has opened and there is a management committee and a residents' association there is opportunity to increase a church presence.

Parish Census and deprivation summary

Parish population (2021): 981

	Parish	Diocese	National
% aged 0-19	16%	20%	23%
% aged 20-44	21%	25%	33%
% aged 45-69	40%	36%	31%
% aged 70 & over	23%	20%	14%
% Christian	53%	55%	46%
% non-Christian religion	1%	2%	11%

Parish deprivation rank (IMD 2019): 5405

(1=most deprived parish in the Church of England, 12,239=least deprived)

For more detailed census & deprivation info: see <http://arcg.is/IRaS4CS>
<https://www.churchofengland.org/researchandstats> and
<http://www2.cuf.org.uk/poverty-england/poverty-map>

Number of churches in parish (2024): 1

Parish Code: 180253

Walford Parish and the people who live here

Walford is a scattered parish of approximately 1100, some of whom live in fairly isolated areas and small settlements.

The housing is mixed, as are the backgrounds and ages of the population.

St Michael's Church is positioned on the main road between Coughton and Walford with easy access and parking. The prominent war memorial on the road at the entrance to the church drive gives a visual marker and focus, positioning the church within the life of the wider community - whether regular church attenders or not.



Along the main road towards Ross and Coughton is **Walford School** with which we have a very good relationship. There is a thriving pub, The Mill Race, which is well supported by locals and where you will receive a warm welcome. The well maintained and busy **Village Hall** in the centre of Walford itself, is used by many different groups. Walford Scout Beavers pack meet here and they attend and take part in the annual Remembrance Service in the church. The village hall runs seasonal fetes and markets which draw in the community and help support the hall itself. The church has a reciprocal arrangement with the village hall for overflow parking around big events.

The civil parish extends into Bishopswood, the neighbouring settlement, so covers a fairly large geographical area. The council maintains a "community support scheme" aimed at tackling loneliness amongst the many elderly people of the parish.

The Walford Parish Worshipping Community



Our hallmarks as a church have over very many years been great hospitality, warmth of welcome, care, imagination, and a willingness to try new things. We currently have a number of linked congregations with worship in different styles – Eucharistic, lay led morning worship, All Age, meeting on Sundays, plus our popular midweek monthly Paddle and Parise group which meets in a home.

We are in a period of rebuilding and getting back out into our community. There are very encouraging signs from the steps we have taken so far. We are regrowing a **monthly All Age service** from the bottom up. Before Christmas we welcomed our newest, youngest, member aged 7 days! Our oldest All Age member is in his 90s. Our children are learning by experience our values of hospitality, relationships and creativity and the rhythm of prayer and worship through the year. Sometimes our All Age services are informal communions and sometimes non Eucharistic, and weather permitting, outside again in the summer. The other Sundays are currently generally Eucharistic with occasional morning prayer. There is scope for reintroducing a second all age service in the month.



Our hopes and plans for the future at Walford



We are determined to continue to grow again and to reach more effectively back into the lives of the people of our parish – and we are encouraged by our progress so far but recognise there is a long way to go.

Our goals are reaching our community once more and strengthening community relationships, rebuilding our worshipping communities, deepening our ties with Walford School and reconnecting with our teens.

We also love marking significant moments in the lives of local people coming to St Michael's for prayer, baptisms, weddings and funerals – as they have done for centuries. We hope to see that Life Events ministry grows again too.

We are using our financial assets boldly to make a new growth project possible for this decade – providing the seed funding for a “LifeLink” Chaplain in John Kyrle High School, in the Ross Parishes, in partnership with the wider deanery and the diocese. In this way we can go on sowing and nurturing the seeds of faith and keeping in touch with local young people as they move from primary to secondary school.



Brampton Abbotts Parish

Parish Census and deprivation summary

Parish population (2021): 932

	Parish	Diocese	National
% aged 0-19	18%	20%	23%
% aged 20-44	19%	25%	33%
% aged 45-69	41%	36%	31%
% aged 70 & over	22%	20%	14%
% Christian	57%	55%	46%
% non-Christian religion	2%	2%	11%

Parish deprivation rank (IMD 2019): 5142

(1=most deprived parish in the Church of England, 12,239=least deprived)

For more detailed census & deprivation info: see <http://arcg.is/IRaS4CS>

<https://www.churchofengland.org/researchandstats> and

<http://www2.cuf.org.uk/poverty-england/poverty-map>

Number of churches in parish (2024): 1

Parish Code: I80224

Brampton Abbotts parish comprises a traditional cul-de-sac village about 1.5 miles from Ross plus the separate Greytrees area of housing which lies within the civil parish of Ross.



In the village is the historic closed church of St Michael and All Angels, notable for its association with the architect, W D Caroe. Its idyllic rural position allows views over to Ross, where the spire of St Mary's is clearly visible, and beyond to the Black Mountains in Wales.

The village hall was badly damaged by "The Beast from the East" and was renovated and reopened in 2023, a testament to the hard work and cooperation of the local community. During the period when neither the church nor the village hall were available, worship took place in the churchyard in the form of a Forest Church.

There is also a nursery school, Oak House, which has close ties with St Mary's in Ross. Brampton Abbotts Primary is a church school (actually situated in Ross parish, and effectively St Mary's Church School). A housing development of 10 new houses, St Michael's Grove, is due for completion this August. This is by far the largest single addition of houses in the village and will inject new life and personality.

Monthly worship is in the village hall, and six times a year in the St Michael and All Angels church. The Easter, Harvest Festival, St Michael's patronal and Remembrance services are typically held in the church building. Some residents also attend the regular services at St Mary's.



Our Local schools

There are 17 Primary schools, one Secondary school and a number of Nursery settings in our deanery. Within the Ross parishes there are 4 primary schools, each with an on-site nursery, 3 independent nurseries and a high school. The churches have excellent and growing relationships with all the schools.

Schools ministry is a high priority for us – we know that although 95% of the children and young people of our country do not attend any church (and that is the same for us here), most of them ARE in school - giving us the opportunity to inspire them to explore faith and to grow in hope and love.

Moreover, national research also shows that at primary age 84% of children are interested and very open to exploring faith - and that is our experience through our work in our schools here. Expanding those connections and opportunities is a priority for us.

Primary and nursery schools

‘Open the Book’ teams regularly visit the schools, and all Year 6 pupils are presented with a copy of the Scripture Union booklet ‘It’s Your move’, written to help pupils make the transition to secondary school, we have also led workshops around this publication in two schools, this year. On occasion, pupils have enjoyed participating in all-day workshops at St Mary’s with themes such as Easter, Christmas and Remembrance. Our aim is for all young people, their families and staff, to have opportunities to explore faith through the work we do in school, the relationships we forge, and through the growing involvement with the life of our churches through the school and church year.

Brampton Abbots CE Primary School is our church school, Despite the name, the school is in the Ross Parish, having transferred from their outdated premises in the village in 1987. Members of our congregations serve on the governing body and the Rector is an ex-officio governor. Our ministry team regularly lead Collective Worship. The school is part of a federation with **Bridstow CE Primary School**, which is just across the river in a neighbouring village parish.

Ashfield Park Primary School is the largest primary school in the area and is located just beyond our churchyard, a short walk away. For many years we have welcomed the staff and pupils to church for events, festivals and more. The visiting OtB team is an ecumenical group.

Walford Primary School is not a church school, but they have forged strong links with Walford Church, and are pleased to welcome members of the ministry team to lead Collective worship.

St Joseph’s RC Primary have staged several productions in St Mary’s and a number of their pupils belong to our Youth Choir and worship with us with their families.

Oak House Nursery, a highly successful nursery based in Brampton Abbots holds events, at least termly, in St Mary’s.



Work Together, Grow Together, Flourish Together



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

'Treat others as you would like to be treated' Matthew 7:12





The LifeLink Project

Linking school + church + homelife
across Ross and Archenfield Deanery



The Church of England vision for education is of serving the whole of the country and supporting young people in growing up to “live life in all its fullness” and national research has shown that faith is most likely to grow when the spheres of school + church + homelife are linked. In response, the Diocese of Hereford has recently appointed chaplains to work in the Hereford Academy and the Bishop of Hereford’s Bluecoat School, both in Hereford with a special “LifeLink” focus on connecting school + church + homelife.

The Ross and Archenfield Deanery has also a long-term vision of reaching the young people of our deanery with the good news of God’s love for them by working with all our deanery primary schools and the one secondary school in the deanery and is now seeking to appoint a “LifeLink Chaplain” to work in John Kyrle High School. Our deanery LifeLink Project will foster a common set of collaborative approaches to working with our deanery primary schools and on up into secondary school strengthening the school + church + homelife/community linkages. As well as working towards appointing a LifeLink Chaplain we have established a new deanery schools/benefices network to share resources, learn together and support one another.

Alongside the schools work the Deanery LifeLink Project aims to see the development of a market town and two rural LifeLink Young People’s Hubs – based on St Mary’s, Ross and on two other strategically placed rural settings in the deanery. Each of these will, over time, pioneer approaches linking school + church + homelife and we expect to see at least one Young People’s Fresh Expression in the deanery.

We value working ecumenically and members of other churches are part of the schools network. We have also been developing the project in collaboration with the ecumenical mentoring team that has been working for many years in John Kyrle High School. We hope that this ecumenical collaboration will continue to develop as we work together in our communities.

John Kyrle High School, Ross on Wye



John Kyrle High School is situated in Ross Parish and we now have the opportunity to strengthen our links with the one secondary school in our town and deanery. Our aim, in collaboration with the diocese and deanery, is to appoint a Chaplain to work in the High School, Ross Parishes and the deanery, so that the connections and relationships we make in primary schools can continue and grow through secondary years and beyond, to inspire lifelong faith, hope and love.



John Kyrle High School has a mission to serve the young people, families and communities of Ross and the surrounding area. While not a church school, JKHS wants to see all students have opportunities to find meaning and purpose in life and to grow up with the skills and resources they need to enable them to live fulfilling lives and contribute positively to society. The school has a highly positive ethos of encouragement and team working among staff and students and is looking forward to welcoming a chaplain to join the team.

We are a good fit to work together as parish church and town school sharing a common mission to serve the young people, families and communities of Ross, and, with other local Anglican and ecumenical churches, the wider area too.

Collaborative Ministry and Mission in the Ross Parishes

Team working through the vacancy

Following the last rector's move, the benefice is being led through the vacancy by our wardens in collaboration with our rural dean, the Revd Sheila Anthony. They are ably supported by our parish administrator, by our SSM and local, retired and visiting clergy, our readers, our PCCs, and growing teams of lay ministers.

Our staffing complement normally includes a full-time rector, a part time House for Duty Associate Priest, and we regularly have a curate training with us. We are also hoping to appoint a full time LifeLink Chaplain.

The Ross Parish Officers (PCC)



Bryan Jones BEM
Churchwarden



Mark Sanderson BEM
Churchwarden



Rachel Lewis
PCC Secretary



Roy Milnes
PCC Treasurer

The Walford Parish Officers (PCC)



Murray Alston
Churchwarden



Gay Chinn
Churchwarden



Sanna Drummond
PCC Secretary



Karen Chinn
PCC Treasurer

Brampton Abbots Parish Officers (PCC)



Matthew Hawkes
PCC Secretary



Elaine Leney
Treasurer

2020 Mission Implementation Portfolio Leads / LifeLink Hub Team

The lay members of this team are PCC appointees with briefs to take forward the mission priority areas of faith, hope and love (the Five Marks of Mission) in the Benefice, with the Rector.



Peter Reynolds
Inspiring Faith



Anne Morris
Children, Schools



Paul Cummings
Inspiring Hope



Melanie Mellor
Inspiring Love



Julian Hallett
Inspiring Love



Rosie Winyard
Inspiring Love



The Rector
To be appointed



Caroline Pascoe
SSM



Associate Priest
To be appointed



Lifelink Chaplain
To be appointed



Mark Sanderson,
Warden

Lay and Ordained Ministers

Our rural dean and wardens have a depth of support to draw on in our SSM and local and visiting clergy, our readers, chaplains, and growing teams of lay ministers.



Caroline Pascoe
SSM



Colin Leggate
PTO



David Thomas
PTO



John Davies
PTO



Derek Glover
Reader



Freda Davies
Reader

Local Ministers

Ours was one of the first benefices in the diocese to form a collaborative Local Ministry Team in the 1990s and this has taken a range of forms over the years. Currently we have new teams of Lay Worship Leaders and also Pastoral Visitors. We are in the process of recruiting a team of Lay Missioners. Collaborative working is important for us in such busy parishes with such a strong mission and ministry agenda involving so many people



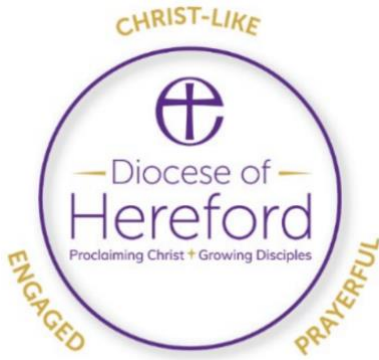
Benefice Administrator: Rachael Daniel

Benefice Safeguarding Officer: Judith Wiggins



Chaplaincy in the Ross Parishes

We have several voluntary chaplaincy roles in the Ross Parishes including Industrial and Retail Chaplaincy, Air and Sea Cadets, and the Royal British Legion. The LifeLink Chaplaincy post will be our first School and Young Peoples Chaplaincy role.



The Diocesan & Deanery Strategies and our goals

We are very encouraged by the direction of travel of the recently renewed diocesan and deanery strategies – and by how aligned we are with that in the Ross Parishes. We welcome the opportunity to work with the wider deanery and diocese to be resourced, to encourage others, and to learn and grow together.

The diocese is seeking to see the following list of features in each local church:

We are encouraged that we are making good progress with this checklist in Ross and in Walford through our 2020 Vision and Mission implementation and planning.

- ✓ A clear mission and purpose with missional and enabling leadership.
- ✓ Teams of lay and ordained ministers.
- ✓ Clergy and congregations who want to see growth and are willing to change and adapt.
- ✓ A clear path for all to grow in faith.
- ✓ A culture of welcome and good relationships.
- ✓ An all age missional worshipping community.
- ✓ Youth/Intergenerational mission in school, home, church and community settings.
- ✓ Young people involved in decision making and leadership.
- ✓ An engaging digital presence.
- ✓ Sustainable buildings and finances

*“Our overarching aim as a diocese is to have 50 healthy and growing churches with a congregation of 50 people in rural areas or 100 in our market towns, with a minimum of 3% of the population attending a regular form of worship.”
Renewed Diocesan 2030 Strategy*

Seven Bold Diocesan Outcomes by 2030

1. 3% of population (10,000 people) regularly attending worship in our churches

We know this is more challenging in Market Towns than villages but our goal is to grow and to see the age demographic of our congregations match more closely that of our town.

2. Many (at least 50) benefices with a congregation of 50 people

(100 in market towns). Walford All Age services used to nudge towards 50 – it is our ambition to rebuild to these levels. The Ross first Sunday All Age Eucharist has been creeping up and is hovering around 100.

3. Double the number (to 1000 in the diocese) of young people choosing to attend worship regularly. *Our LifeLink Project is a major first step for us towards this ambition.*

4. At least 200(+) self-supporting or lay leaders trained and commissioned.

5. 25 skilled, trained, paid youth church leaders.

6. 50 New Worshipping Communities (25 for children and young people, including FLOURISH Worshipping Communities). *It is our aim to see a new Fresh Expression in Ross – in St Mary’s or in school.*

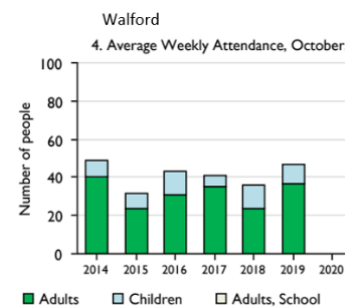
7. Equipped whole life disciples.

We are also very encouraged to see the following aspirations for benefices and deaneries in the strategy:

- Youth/Intergenerational Hubs connecting school, home and church, enabling young people to grow in faith and form worshipping communities – proposed that Ross and Abbeydore Deaneries will collaborate.
- At least one new youth-focussed worshipping community surrounded by a youth mission and discipleship vision and approach.
- Excellent Life Events ministry
- Training pathways for volunteers and local ordained leaders to enable young people to be at the heart of the church’s mission.
- Develop and expand our existing network of school chaplains.

www.hereford.anglican.org/

www.hereford.anglican.org/our-vision



The finances of both St Mary's and Walford Churches are in a healthy state.

For **St Mary's in Ross**, for a few years prior to, and including the Covid 19 pandemic, the outgoings of St Mary's exceeded income, however a Stewardship Campaign was launched in 2022. This resulted in a marked increase in giving including members signing up to the Parish Giving Scheme, since when we have not had to draw on reserves to cover running costs. Overall our reserves are very healthy.

An active fundraising group meets regularly and plans both small and large events. In 2023 over £20,000 was raised for the ministry of the church. Such events include Come and Sing services followed by supper which attract singers who join our own choir for worship. Regular coffee mornings take place on the first Saturday of each month and, as well as raising money, provide an important social opportunity for both church goers and townsfolk. The church is open every day and visitors make a reasonable contribution via donations at the door, both by cash and card.

St Mary's pays its Diocesan contribution in full and on time (St Mary's PCC has resolved to offer £76,800 in 2025).

In addition, the Friends of St Mary's holds regular fundraising events for the fabric of the church. It has been hugely successful in obtaining grants for projects, most recently the extension of our nave platform.

St Mary's PCC also recognises the importance of charitable giving and as well as special collections when disasters have struck, gives each year to a variety of charities, both in the UK and abroad.

For **St Michael's in Walford**, the operational costs are generally covered by the income, though this can fluctuate depending on the level of fundraising undertaken in any given year. The fundraising committee is active and has hosted harvest lunches, celebrations for royal events, flower festivals and open gardens. Stewardship has also proven successful for Walford, in the form of the Parish Giving Scheme and Gift Days. St Michael's is equally proud of its annual support of both mission and local charitable organisations.

Walford contributes generously to the Diocese and the PCC resolved to offer £10,640 in 2025.

As a closed church with a small congregation, not helped by the long closure of the village hall, **Brampton Abbots** holds a small reserve, used to maintain the churchyard. The PCC owns the adjacent car park.

With the building of new houses in the village and the reopening of café church in the village hall, we are working to rebuild the congregation and strengthen the finances of St Michaels and All Angels.

Together the offer across the benefice covers what is needed for a stipendiary rector and a benefice part time House for Duty priest based at Walford.

St Mary's Church Ross-on-Wye

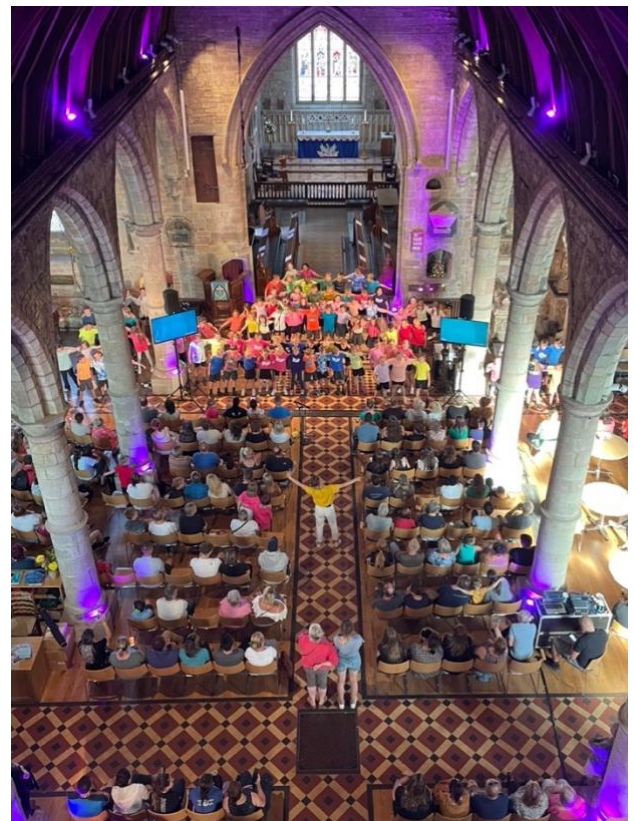
A common comment from visitors to St Mary's is that the church seems so welcoming and has the feel of a place that is well connected to and respected by the community. This is so satisfying for us and is very much where we want to be.

Like St Michael's Walford, a recent reordering project has transformed the inside space. Eight years ago we removed all the pews, replaced much of the flooring, added toilets, kitchen and children's spaces. We have also rethought the main entrance which is now fully accessible with glass doors providing a great welcome to the space. We've also relit the church (with functional and atmospheric lighting schemes) upgraded sound and AV systems. Most recently we've enlarged the "performance space" at the top of the nave, also creating a much better focus for nave based services. The result is a bright modern space within and embracing our superb Medieval building.

The church dates from the late thirteenth century, most of the current floor plan dates from this time. Two extensive and sensitive Victorian restorations pretty much left us with the building we use today. We have, as already mentioned, recently reworked that space with a truly imaginative reordering.

Our church buildings in Ross and Walford are emblematic of our approach to ministry. We embrace the best of what is traditional, repurpose, reorder and enhance it and offer it to and for our communities.

Across the churchyard is **St Mary's Hall**. Originally built as a school at the very beginning of the 19th century, this building is in use most days of the week, often by the church for meetings, but also by a number of community groups. There is a main hall and some first floor meeting rooms, some of these are let on a long term contracts to other organisations. The basement houses the CTRD Community Larder and storage space. St Mary's Hall is run by a trust under the governance of the PCC and is entirely self-financing.



St Michael and All Angels Church, Walford

The Parish Church of St Michael and All Angels is one of the oldest churches in the diocese with parts dating back to about 1100AD. It is built on the site of a mud and wattle Celtic church.

In 2016 we carried out some reordering of the west end of the nave, raising the floor to provide better access, removing some of the pews and repositioning the Tudor font. This has given us a large communal area with modern Kitchen and toilet facilities. The new chairs and large stacking oak tables together with subtle LED lighting enable us to use this space for varied styles of worship and mean the church building is also more suitable to be used by groups in the community as well as other church activities.

The church is open every day during the daytime. The area attracts many visitors all the year round and quite a few people do visit the church, including many who come to tend the graves of loved ones in the churchyard.

There is also a church field used for parking for large services and events.

We often worship outside in the church grounds in the summer. The grounds are ideal for informal worship and for Forest Church style worship. We have also held camps for teens and for families in the grounds and Champing in the church itself. There is a great deal of scope for imagination in the grounds.



Brampton Abbots Church Building

St Michael and All Angels Church, Brampton Abbots

The small village of Brampton Abbots is just a few miles to the north of Ross-on-Wye. Although the church is now closed, a major restoration of the building has been undertaken recently. The church community has a PCC and worships six times a year in the church, in the nearby Village Hall and occasionally in the churchyard.

Brampton Abbots church is now trying to re-establish itself as a community building.



Rector Person Specification

This post would especially suit someone ...

	Essential	Desirable
A priest who is comfortable with all that is good within the differing traditions of the Church of England, to bring this to people of faith and of no faith in a way that enriches their lives, encourages them on their faith journey and supports them through prayer.	✓	
A caring person, to be a visible presence in the community keen and able to engage with all ages, especially young people, families and schools. To communicate appropriately, in person, by example, and through social media.	✓	
An inspiring person able to embrace all that working with teams brings; its opportunities and challenges. To use and to trust the best that each person has to offer, to be prepared to delegate, to build on and expand churches that welcome all.	✓	
Able to work effectively and well with the deanery and diocese		✓
A good organiser and strategist		✓
An ability to engage with young people and their families		✓
A good teacher and communicator		✓

The Rectory

The Rectory is situated east of the church, just across the road (Church Street) from the church. It is a handsome 1930s house, considered by successive Rectors to be one of the perks of the job. The property has five bedrooms, two bathrooms and three reception rooms. One of these is the study which has separate access from outside and int's own toilet. Almost all rooms are south facing (several dual aspect) onto a large private garden. There is parking for around 6 vehicles. The benefice office is conveniently situated in an annex of the same building, with two dividing doors between the house and the office.





Please note, the ground floor plan below has a number of inaccuracies. It does not show properly the separation of the study (bigger than indicated), cloakroom and WC, from the rest of the property and an external door enabling visitors direct access to study.

Ground Floor



First Floor



Floor plan produced for identification only. Not to Scale.
Plan produced using PlanUp.

Our support for you, should you become our Rector

We have signed up to the Clergy Covenant (<https://rossparishes.uk/pcc>) and in so doing we have committed to support all members of our ministry team, to treat them with respect and to share the load.

We have a large ministry team between them they cover a number of responsibilities across the parishes. We also have active PCCs and teams supporting the three mission portfolios of Faith, Hope and Love and the LifeLink Chaplaincy Project.

Our congregations (especially in Ross) comprise a large and growing number of people who have a passion for the work of our churches and who are there to lend a hand. You will not be alone.

We will:

- Welcome you (and your family) with a friendly welcome
- Help you to create the best possible home for yourself (and your family)
- Encourage you to develop a realistic and healthy work life balance
- Encourage and support you in your own professional development
- Urge you to leave time for your family and then respect that time
- Not expect you to be present for everything we do
- Support and pray for you as you discern the best way forward for us