



TOLLAND  
CHIPSTABLE

WIVELISCOMBE  
HUISSHAMPFLOWER  
BROMPTONRALPH

CRADDINGTON  
CLATWORTHY

# WIVELISCOMBE AND THE HILLS

## BENEFICE PROFILE

**MARCH 2018**

## Welcome

We are delighted that this profile has caught your attention! We are praying for the right person to lead us into the next stages of our life as a benefice and we ask you to consider prayerfully if you might be that person.

We are privileged to live in one of the most beautiful and unspoilt parts of the West Country. There is an exceptional community spirit, both in the hills villages and in the friendly, lively town of Wiveliscombe. Here there are two good schools, a large number of local businesses. Many people both live and work in the area.

The benefice consists of one quite small but growing town with six other rural parishes with a total of nine places of worship. In this profile we will try and explain what we have done so far to make this work and what we see as the next steps.

This benefice profile includes all information on each of the parishes. It is structured as below:-

Setting the Scene	1 – 8
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More information on the benefice can be found on our website [www.wiveychurches.org.uk](http://www.wiveychurches.org.uk) and a map can be found here <http://www.my-towns.co.uk/wiveliscombe-map.html>.

### WHO ARE WE?

We are the United Benefice of Wiveliscombe and the Hills, at the gateway to Exmoor just a few miles east of the Devon/Somerset border. The benefice was established in 1993 when the town parish of Wiveliscombe was joined with “The Four Towers” of Chipstable, Raddington, Huish Champflower and Clatworthy. In 2009, Brompton Ralph and Tolland joined to make us the ‘Seven Towers’.

### AREAS OF GROWTH.

St Andrew’s in particular has sought to make its worship more inclusive, with the regular worshippers increasing by about a third and the number of children involved more than doubling. Lay input has greatly expanded, with twenty participants in the CPAS ‘Growing Leaders’ course, run from 2016-17. The church has been extensively reordered with the partial removal of box pews and the creation of attractive kitchen, toilet and meeting areas. Involvement in small groups has grown from one group to seven, which meet at least monthly. Charitable giving is also much improved.

### WORK STILL TO DO

Although the congregation and the life of the church in Wiveliscombe has grown in recent years, it still feels like ‘early days’ and there are the inevitable tensions between those who say ‘more, faster’ and those who prefer more traditional ways. We need leadership and guidance here. It is not so obvious where is the potential for growth in the smaller, mainly older congregations in the hills.

With strong local allegiances, they need to be encouraged and nurtured, in order to feel more part of the wider benefice. This is another challenge before us, where we need help.



## Around Wivey and the hills....

The area enjoys a rich landscape of rolling hills and farmland. It sits on and above the B3227 which connects us to the county town of Taunton 10 miles to the east.



Taunton has good shopping facilities and good rail connections. The M5 motorway is just 20 minutes away from where Cornwall and Devon are a simple drive away to the south, with Bristol being just an hour to the north.

### EMPLOYMENT

There is a surprisingly diverse range of employment opportunities in the area and it could be that as many people travel in from outside to work as do the reverse. There is of course farming and rural sports, and also a number of small engineering firms, breweries, builders merchants, a reservoir, two schools, an old people's home and a care home, the medical centre, Nursery and pre-school, artists, and the shops and eating places.



### COMMUNITY SPIRIT

This is much commented upon by locals and visitors alike. Where else do you find an outdoor community swimming pool, run since the 1920s by volunteers and the 'Wivey Link' - a community transport service run by volunteers. There is also a Community office, run by the 'Wiveliscombe Area Partnership'. Every year the benefice is at the heart of the '10 Parishes Festival', a celebration of all that is creative and artistic in the wider community. There is a radio station '10 radio' and local paper 'The Messenger'.



For sports lovers there are thriving rugby, cricket and tennis clubs, plus badminton, karate, aerobics classes and a gym. There are Cubs, Scouts and Guides groups, a selection of music groups for all ages, a Civic Society, Young Farmers, the 'Cinema Obscura', the Wivey Walkers, the Horticultural Society, a Flower Club, Garden Club, Country Dance Club, WI, Rotary, Twining Society, the 'Transition Town' group and many others.

### SHOPS

Brompton Ralph has a part time shop and post office but otherwise the area's shops congregate in Wiveliscombe: these include two small supermarkets, a Post Office, Delicatessen, Pharmacy, butchers, a garage, petrol station, as well as charity, hardware, garden, antique and gift shops.

There are several pubs, an Indian restaurant, Chinese takeaway, fish and chip shop and a pizza stall. There are two cafes and the newly opened Duende restaurant. The town has an excellent new medical centre, a hairdresser's, vets and a library.

The Hills parishes nestle in the Brendons, on the high ground that circles Wiveliscombe from Tolland to the north around to Raddington in the west. The parishes are individual, largely self-sufficient, resilient and, whilst regular congregations may be smaller, there is strong local commitment to the village churches. Most enjoy a more traditional form of regular worship but the PCC's work hard to reach out to and are supported by their local communities, particularly with special services and fund-raising events.

### SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION

Wivey offers good local education from pre to secondary school with outstanding higher and further education being further afield in Taunton.

#### The Paddocks Nursery and Pre School

The Paddocks Nursery and Pre School is on the site of the Children's Centre built and opened in 2008. It offers provision from 0 to 5 operating under the management of the primary school.

#### Wiveliscombe Primary School

Wiveliscombe Primary School is housed in an attractive modernised Victorian building. It currently has approximately 230 pupils and was described by a full Ofsted Inspection in June 2017 as GOOD.



#### Kingsmead Academy

Kingsmead Academy has over 800 pupils. A full Ofsted Inspection in 2017, which described the school as GOOD, commented that *“All members of the school are encouraged to aspire to achieve high targets...It was clear to inspectors that relationships throughout the school are strong.*

*“Pupils and adults treat each other with care and respect and this encourages a positive learning environment”*. Kingsmead has a major new school building project in place to update and expand the facilities.



### GROWTH

Tight planning restrictions prevent much new building in the villages. Wiveliscombe however as the third largest town in Taunton Deane has over 200 additional dwellings allocated for the next plan period up to 2028.



### Tone Deanery

Tone Deanery comprises five Benefices with the largest population centre being the town of Wellington. Clergy Chapter meets regularly for prayer and fellowship and to share ideas and other topics of mutual concern.

The new incumbent is assured of a warm welcome from a supportive group of colleagues. Bath and Wells Diocese is currently giving greater emphasis to the strategic role of deaneries in terms of mission and deanery mission planning.

Tone Deanery has recently completed its deanery mission action plan which focuses on the following key areas:

- To invest in developing deanery networks to strengthen and support the mission and ministry of the churches in the deanery
- To develop training resources, to nurture spiritual and theologically informed lay leaders and to develop the understanding of every member ministry by identifying, developing and using the gifts of all our people.
- To establish a pioneering culture across the deanery to help us to reimagine ministry “placing mission and evangelism at the heart of everything we do”

## The Team

The benefice could not function without a much larger team of church warden, retired clergy, lay readers and active lay members. We also employ a secretary to support the rector and the team.



Some of our benefice church wardens: Front row: **Judith Swan**, **Peter Pearson** (St Andrew's), **Becky Mills** (Raddington). Back row: **Sue Welch** (Brompton Ralph) **Maureen Canney** (Tolland) **Michael Biggs** (Clatworthy), **Sue Levinge** (Chipstable), **Denise Broom** (Huish Champflower) and **Simon Coates** (Raddington)



### RECTORS SECRETARY-

**Lorna Thorne** works Friday mornings and provides administrative support to the rector and the parishes.

We are supported by a number of local retired ministers



### Rev Hugh Allen

Hugh works more "behind the scenes" mentoring, offering spiritual direction, and occasionally taking a service. He has also taken groups on trips to Israel and retreats .



### Rev Sue Green

Sue was a member of the congregation before being ordained. She moved to the Blackdown Benefice to be Rector but returned to Wivey and helps lead services there.

And also .....

- **Rev David Hopley** lives in Clatworthy and helps take services there.
- **Revs. Margaret and Adrian Armstrong** live in Brompton Ralph and regularly help take services there and in Tolland.
- **Rev Jeremy Hellier** lives outside the benefice but regularly leads services in Langley Marsh.



Our 'grown' leaders and mentors

We also have three readers who serve the benefice:



### Martin Valuks

Martin was baptised, confirmed and married at St Andrews. He has been licensed as a lay reader since 2001 and takes various services across the benefice.



### Vigdis Adams

Vigdis was licensed in 2009, and works across the benefice. Her church background is very different, coming from Norwegian Lutheran / Pentecostal /Baptist origins.



### Adam Green

Adam has been a reader since 1979. He returned to Wivey and the Hills in 2015 and helps lead services in the Hills. Now retired he enjoys sailing, walking, choral singing and astronomy.

### GROWING LEADERS

We ran a Growing Leaders Course for 20 people, using the material from CPAS from August 2016 to June 2017. Many of these 'grown' leaders are now playing an active role in the life of the benefice through lay leading and ministry.

## Church Services

There are weekly services in St Andrew's and two services a month in the Hills churches, except for Tolland which has eight services a year. The pattern looks like this

Church	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday	4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday
St Andrew's, Wiveliscombe	10:45 Morning Worship*	10:45 Holy Communion CW*	10:45 All age Communion	10:45 Holy Communion CW*
St Luke's, Langley Marsh	8:30 Holy Communion BCP		8:30 Holy Communion BCP	
St Peter's Huish Champflower	11:15 Family Service**		9:15 Matins BCP	
St Mary's Brompton Ralph	9:15 Holy Communion (CW)		4pm Evening Prayer ***	
All Saints Chipstable****		9:15 Holy Communion (or MW)		4pm Evening Worship.***
St Mary Magdalene, Clatworthy		9:15 Holy Communion (or MW)		6pm Evening Worship (or HC)
St Michael's Raddington	3pm Evensong BCP***		9:15 Holy Communion CW	
St John the Baptist, Tolland	Irregular services (totalling 8) March to October and Christmas			
Waterrow Hall				9:15 Waterrow Worship or Messy Church

\* with Allsorts for 5-10 and XStream for 10+ and crèche

\*\* with Sunday school from 10.30

\*\*\* The time of afternoon/evening services varies through the year between 4pm and 6pm

\*\*\*\* Services sometimes held in some one's home in winter.

5th Sundays there is a Benefice Service at 10.45 am. Until 2017 this was at St Andrew's but it now rotates through the Benefice.

One Thursday per month we have a 10 am "Communion in the Hills" (various locations) - celebrated by retired priest.

**This pattern would not be manageable for one person by themselves but with the support of the team becomes possible. The last Rector typically led three services on any Sunday. During the vacancy we have some extra help from outside the benefice and many services are being lay led.**

### Benefice views



Hurstone Nature Reserve



Clatworthy Reservoir



Huish Champflower

## Growing Deeper in Faith

### HOME GROUPS AND SMALL GROUPS

Four years ago just one Home Group met regularly in the benefice. Then in 2015 after an inspirational benefice weekend seven groups formed in Lent to follow the Resource 'Season of Renewal' materials. Since then 5-7 groups have continued.

In 2017 over 60 people took part in the Open Doors Lent initiative, learning about the worldwide persecuted church. This year we have created our own 'Making Connections' course to learn about the saints to whom all our churches are dedicated.



There is also a Prayer Chain made up of people committed to praying for needs and requests, and informal Praying Partners encouraging relationships between friends and God.

### FRIDAY PRAYER GROUP

Every Friday morning a group of 6-12 people meet in St Andrew's for 20 minutes to pray for the Lord's work in our area.

### EXPLORING CHRISTIANITY

One of Our Lay Readers has led this course on three occasions now, most recently commencing in September 2017. Previous students have become leaders, Readers, and Churchwardens,

### JULIAN MEETINGS

We have monthly Julian meetings in Brompton Ralph to foster the teaching and practice of contemplative prayer in the Christian tradition.

### The Diocesan Vision

In response to God's immense love for us we seek to be God's people living and telling the story of Jesus. Our vision and the diocesan strategy that is emerging from it speaks of the story of Jesus; his life, teaching and work, his death and resurrection; the story which is the context of our faith and the content of our message. We seek to live this story as disciples of Jesus Christ in the world and to tell it, both in sharing the good news and by the way in which our lives speak about Him.

We have discerned three priorities for action that must be at the centre of our diocesan life so that each and every one of us to 'live and tell the story of Jesus':

- To place mission and evangelism at the heart of everything that we do
- To realign our ministry resources towards mission
- To identify, develop and use the gifts of all our people

They reflect the way in which we seek to put our vision into practice and to address the challenges we face across the diocese.

## Engagement with Schools

The 'Open the Book' team is comprised of Christians from the Benefice and the Congregational church. Each month they take the morning assembly at the Primary School. We act out a Bible story, often including the children, sometimes using puppets. Children are attentive and keen.



**"Open the Book is my favourite assembly of the week": Student Year 4**

The session ends with a short explanation and application, followed by a prayer that they can say 'Amen' to. In 2016 classes from the school visited St Andrew's to see the 'Holy Week display.

Also combined with the Congregational Church is the weekly 'Discuss and Donuts' group at Kingsmead Academy. As the name suggests, there is topical discussion accompanied by the eating of doughnuts!

The Rector leads assemblies for Kingsmead at major festivals and speaks at the Primary School's leavers and Christmas services. Both schools use St Andrew's for their Christmas Carol Concerts.

**The disciples said, 'Lord, teach us to pray'. We are looking for a rector who will continue the task of helping us learn to pray.**

## Facts and Figures

	Population	Members	Average Attendance	Sunday School	Electoral Roll	Parish Share Paid in full
Wiveliscombe (St Andrew's and Langley Marsh)	3000	100	76	Y	128	Y
Brompton Ralph (St Mary's)	188	10	10		28	Y
Chipstable (All Saints) (Waterrow)	250	15 n/a	9 12	Y	27 n/a	Y
Clatworthy (St Mary Magdalene)	100	8	8		8	Y
Huish Champflower (St Peter's)	200	15	Family S - 23 Matins - 11	Y	20	Y
Raddington (St Michael's)	50	9	10		9	Y
Tolland (St John the Baptist)	60	Irregular services Average attendance 20			22	Y

### Finance

- **Full accounts can be made available to applicants on request**
- **All churches pay their parish share in full**
- Each church has a dedicated treasurer
- The 'benefice' finances are managed by the rector's secretary
- Most churches continue to make charitable contributions
- Where issues are identified the PCC's have been proactive in fundraising or identifying new solutions
- There have been several projects which have been delivered by the churches with limited external support
- Where we have completed projects we have benefitted from local grants or gifting
- St Andrew's has a £50,000 agreed loan from the Diocese to aid cash flow during the reordering which has not yet been used

We faithfully believe that our finances are in good order.

### Recent Projects



Tower at Raddington



New Roof at Brompton



Reordering at Wivey



## Your New Home?



The light filled spacious family home, built in the 1970s, is situated in South Street and conveniently located for both St. Andrews, a short walk away, and also the town centre with all its amenities.

There is a large kitchen/diner (Due to be refurbished during the vacancy) looking onto a paved area.



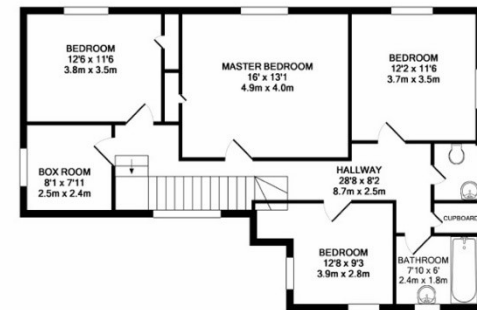
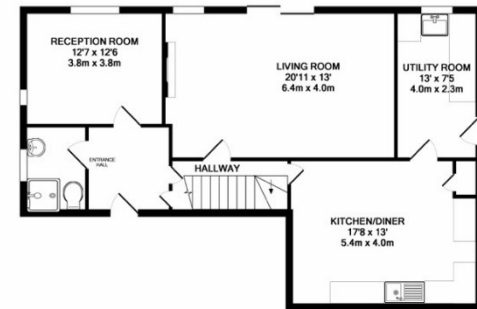
From the lounge, patio doors open onto the good sized garden of about 1/3rd of an acre, which is mostly lawn, and is well screened from the neighbouring houses. The back of the house faces west and benefits from afternoon/evening sun. There are south/westerly views of open fields and the surrounding hills.



Until recently, the study was also the benefice office, however, the benefice office has moved to St. Andrew's following the reordering.



There is ample parking at the front of the Rectory, where there is also an attractive 19<sup>th</sup> century coach house / stable, which was previously used for storage. We would love to see this building redeveloped and made into more useful space for benefit of the Rector and benefice.



1ST FLOOR

Measurements are approximate. Not to scale. Illustrative purposes only. Made with Metropix 10/2018



## Life at St Andrews

Like nearly all churches, we are a mix of those who particularly value the Anglican tradition and liturgies and those who prefer a more contemporary expression. There was a consensus at the time of the last vacancy that the church did need to change to further address the twin weaknesses of 'an elderly and declining congregation' and 'difficulty in reaching out to 20's and 30's age groups and those wishing to discover Jesus for the first time'.

**Knowing, Sharing, Living  
Christ's Love**

Every week about 70 people gather in church to praise God, pray and hear the gospel proclaimed. We enjoy our corporate worship, challenged by high quality preaching from ordained and lay leaders and sing beautiful music led by the choir, skillful organists or by our lively worship band.

We have an engaged church congregation with many parishioners supporting the service through reading God's word, leading prayers and supporting as sides people to ensure visitors are warmly welcomed and feel valued. It is important to us that the family of God and visitors feel they are connected and that there is always someone to listen and to pray with them.

***"The warm, friendly welcome was a key factor for me deciding to return the following week".***

Following each service many people remain to chat over a cup of fresh coffee allowing for friendships to grow as they share the highs and lows of their lives. Specific needs are prayed for and there is an atmosphere of warmth and encouragement.



On the third Sunday we enjoy a delicious breakfast of bacon and croissants in support of the Semiliki Trust.

Behind the scenes we have dedicated teams who create gorgeous flower arrangements, ring the bells, organise the expanding library and who generally keep the church looking clean, tidy and open during the day.

### CONSTANTS AND MILESTONES

- **High Quality teaching**
- **Increasing level of prayerfulness**
- **Fellowship**

Two **Parish weekends** in January 2014 and 2015, facilitated by 'Resource', had a profound impact on the church. We were challenged to identify as 'crew' rather than 'passengers', or more biblically to be 'disciples' rather than just 'church-goers', and many responded positively to this.

The weekends were followed up by two 'Vision' days in September 2014 and January 2016, which we called '**Whatever Next**' and '**Whatever after Next**'. 4 key areas of vision were identified and much of what we have done since has been informed by these.

- **Making Worship (More) Accessible**
- **Growing in Faith and Prayer**
- **Reaching New People**
- **Showing the love of Christ in action**

## Worship

Over recent years our services have evolved to be more lay led and we now have a group of about 20 dedicated people who preach and lead services with a similar number involved in serving the sacrament. They are keen to use their God given gifts to support and encourage the church family.

Our service pattern consists of a range of differing type of services accommodating the practices and traditions of our congregation. This has gradually evolved in particular over the last three years with increasing contemporary style and the congregation growing younger. We have worked to keep the right balance but it hasn't always been easy.



**First Sunday** services are non-Eucharistic giving the opportunity for a longer sermon, a different focus or alternative worship. Our **second and fourth Sunday** Services are more formal using Common Worship. Whilst we do generally follow the lectionary we also sometimes follow themes.

### CHOIR

We have an active choir of about 10 members who lead our worship and sing in our more traditional services. They are unrobed and practice with one of our organists

### ORGAN

We employ an organist for the 1st, 2nd and 4th Sundays. Our organ is suitable for all types and styles of music. Concerts and recitals have been held intermittently. We have a number of organists who play for us.



### FAMILY SERVICE

Our Family Service on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month is our most engaging and diverse service. All ages stay together, the start of the service and the talk is generally lay led and worship is led by our **CHURCH BAND**. We try and make the service more interactive with activities and demonstrations. Breakfast is served before this service from 9:30.

***"The Family Service's warm, friendly approach was a welcome surprise for my first CoE experience: God knew how to draw me in!"***



***Our church band leading worship at our Christmas Carol and Nativity Service***

For our music we use Hymns Old and New but also produce our own Song Supplement.

**Family days** - 60 people attended in November 2016. With activities and workshops to encourage trying something new in worship.

**Pulsford Lodge** – We provide regular service of worship into residential care home in Wivey.

## Children and Youth

Groups for children are run during our non all age services (**Allsorts** for 4-10 and **X Stream** for 11-16). A place to play for preschoolers is provided in our new meeting room for all of our services.

### YOUTH GROUP:

The youth group meets sporadically but at least once a month for our 15+ teens. This group meets in various homes around the town. Our youth group have organised and run youth services on Sunday evenings and visit other youth services.



Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these". Matthew 19:14



*Trip to SPREE in 2017*



*'Live Nativity' at Pitt Farm*



*Candles all around the church during Christingle*

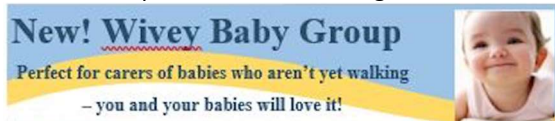
### MESSY CHURCH:

In December we restarted Messy Church. Running monthly, midweek and after-school we mix activities with worship, activities and food. Children can come along and be engaged with God in the church and have fun whilst being supported by the congregation. So far there seems to be a thirst for God as we have welcomed families and 25 – 40 children.



## Outreach and Mission

**Baby Group** - Seeing a lack of provision within the town, following closure of the children's centre, we are running a baby group within the church during Lent. We hope it will become a regular event.



**Live Nativity @ Pitt Farm** - We encourage the community to be involved in our live nativity

**Bread Church** – Runs weekly in church, enabling bakers to chat whilst making bread. Bakers make two loaves so they can share one loaf with others.

**Mother's Union** - We support the work across the world with our prayers and some financial aid.

**Visiting team** – the team visit those in need, newcomers to the area, etc. with a card, flowers and / or for prayer as appropriate.

**Community Café** – Trial run during Lent 2018 on Thursday mornings.



Whilst finances are never easy we recognise our Christian responsibility to help others in need.

Our annual giving has increased to local and national charities.

We are partnered with **Open Doors** to support the world wide persecuted church

We have been raising money for the **Semilki Trust** through our family service breakfasts to print and deliver 1500 children's bibles to 6 dioceses in the Eastern DRC

We are a collection point for **Besom** and **RAFT** (Refuge Aid From Taunton)

We work with the **Blythwood** Shoebox appeal sending presents to children in poverty

Annual quiz for **Christian Aid**

Members of our young people have recently been on **mission** to Albania, Kenya, and Nepal and we have helped them in their fundraising

**Other Plans:** we feel we are coming to a point where mission and outreach can play a larger part in St Andrew's again, with our new facilities a recently grown congregation and the release of energy from the reordering.

## Media

Our **Benefice Magazine** an informative, monthly read advertises our church activities and a range of other items including: book reviews, poetry, charity and local community news and articles related to our faith. We also include information about other local churches. The magazine advertises local businesses and has a print run of over 600.

Our website has recently been refreshed and updated. It is a 'benefice' site rather than St Andrew's but it does focus on activities at St Andrews. Main service sermons are recorded and posted together with news, and events.



We use **Facebook** for more immediate communication. We have over 170 followers and cover most of our content and activities. We also post verses of the day and our talks / sermons.



We also use **twitter** as an alternative. Tweeting from festivals, events, or activities.



## Social

We have enjoyed a number events including:

**Church Picnic** – meeting after church in an outdoor venue to share food, fun, and fellowship.



**Harvest Supper** - Every October we enjoy good homemade food and a barn dance as we celebrate God's good provision to us.



**Breakfast/Lunches** – prior to our family service we serve breakfast and often do a soup lunch after our morning worship. Eating together enables us to build relationships and get to know each other.

## Fundraising

### Friends of St Andrews (FOSA):

The FOSA group was formed to support the fundraising efforts for the reordering project.

#### Events for 2018

- Local performers concert
- Jonathan Viera Concert
- Spring Fete
- Christmas Bazaar

Our **Summer Fete** and **Christmas Bazaar** are at the church are well attended and fun for all.



## Church unity

There are more of us in Wiveliscombe! We strongly believe that our love of the Lord Jesus Christ unites us, and endeavour to work together.

- Evangelical Congregational Church,
- St Richard's Catholic Church and
- Torre Cleeve House Church.

The **Walk of Witness** takes place on Good Friday and includes representatives from all churches.

**Thy Kingdom Come** in 2017 we joined with the other churches and prayer walked the town.

**Christians Against Poverty** - In 2015, congregation members trained to become CAP life changers.

**Women's Day of Prayer** is an annual worldwide event involving all the churches in Wiveliscombe.



## St Andrews, Wiveliscombe

The present church was built in 1829 on the site of the medieval church. The church is in good order and had its last Quinquennial inspection in 2017. It is the largest building in the town. Under the church is an extensive crypt area the converted front section is used as the church meeting rooms and has kitchen and toilet facilities.

“I love St Andrew’s I love the history and the building but I also love the way in which it has evolved recently into a church ready to move onto the next stage in its missional life.” **Congregation member 15 years.**

### CHANGE @ ST ANDREWS

We received an overarching faculty in 2015 for the complete reordering of the internal space and conversion of the crypt with access via lift. We are currently working through Phase 1 of this scheme. The key to unlocking the scheme was the partial removal of the Georgian Pews which created a larger and more flexible worship space.

#### Our Vision – A place ...

- of welcome to all
- where the church family can grow
- where God is central
- in the centre of the local community
- to last



During 2017 builders moved in to convert the three south bays, providing a new kitchen, meeting room and vestry/office. The dais was extended, disabled toilet provided, and the font has been adjusted to make it more accessible.



### WHAT NEXT FOR THE RE-ORDERING?

In 2018 we hope to see more of our plans come to life. The tower room will be transformed into a meeting space, and the north entrance improved by creating an easier access. We also plan to upgrade the audio and visual facilities within the church. Other phases when finances (and energy) permit include underfloor heating and improved conversion of the crypt

## St Luke’s, Langley Marsh

St. Luke’s is a daughter chapel to St Andrew’s. It was originally built by the incumbent in the 1890s, and has since been legally owned by the current incumbent and churchwardens of St Andrew’s.



St Luke’s is strongly supported by the Langley community and is a focus for community activities. There is a local team of volunteers who fundraise to ensure the fabric remains in good condition.

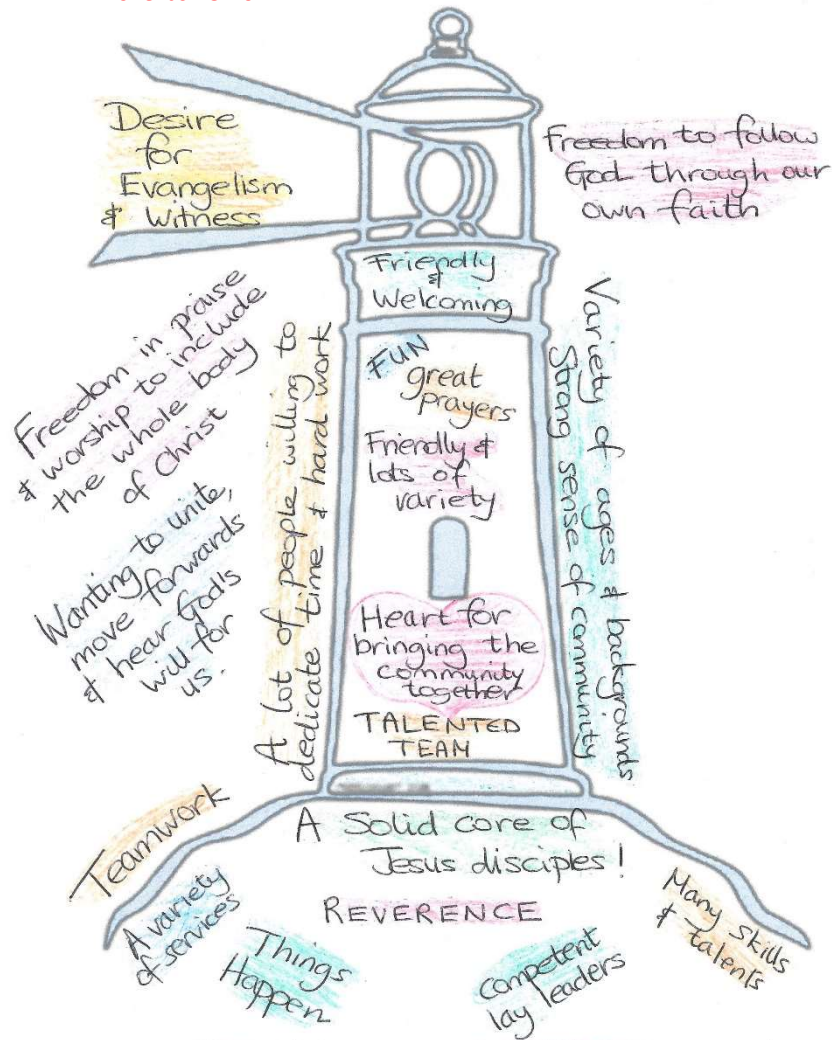
# ALL ABOUT WIVEY

thoughts from the congregation

## Our Strengths are:

...the name of the Lord is a strong tower

Proverbs 18:10

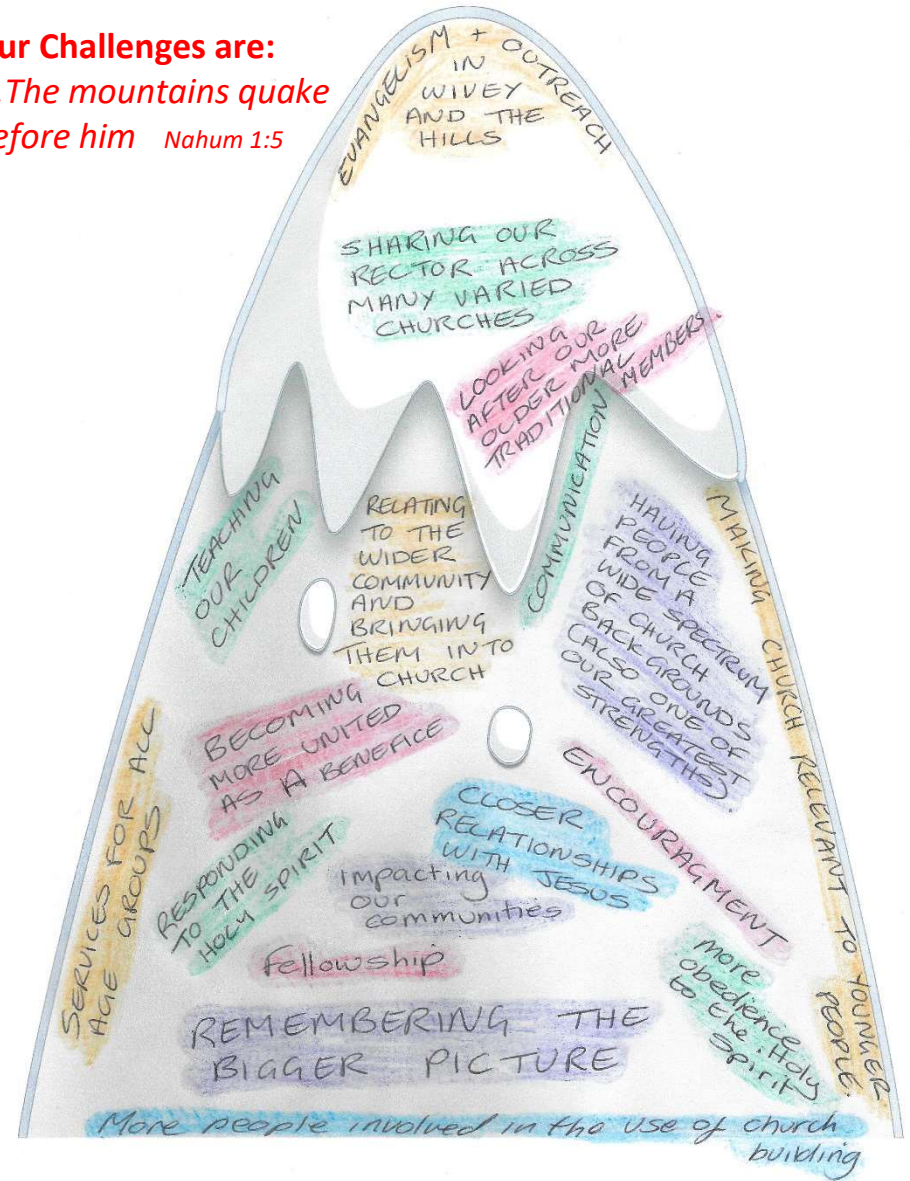


A welcoming social church that wants to show others what Christ has done for us.

## Our Challenges are:

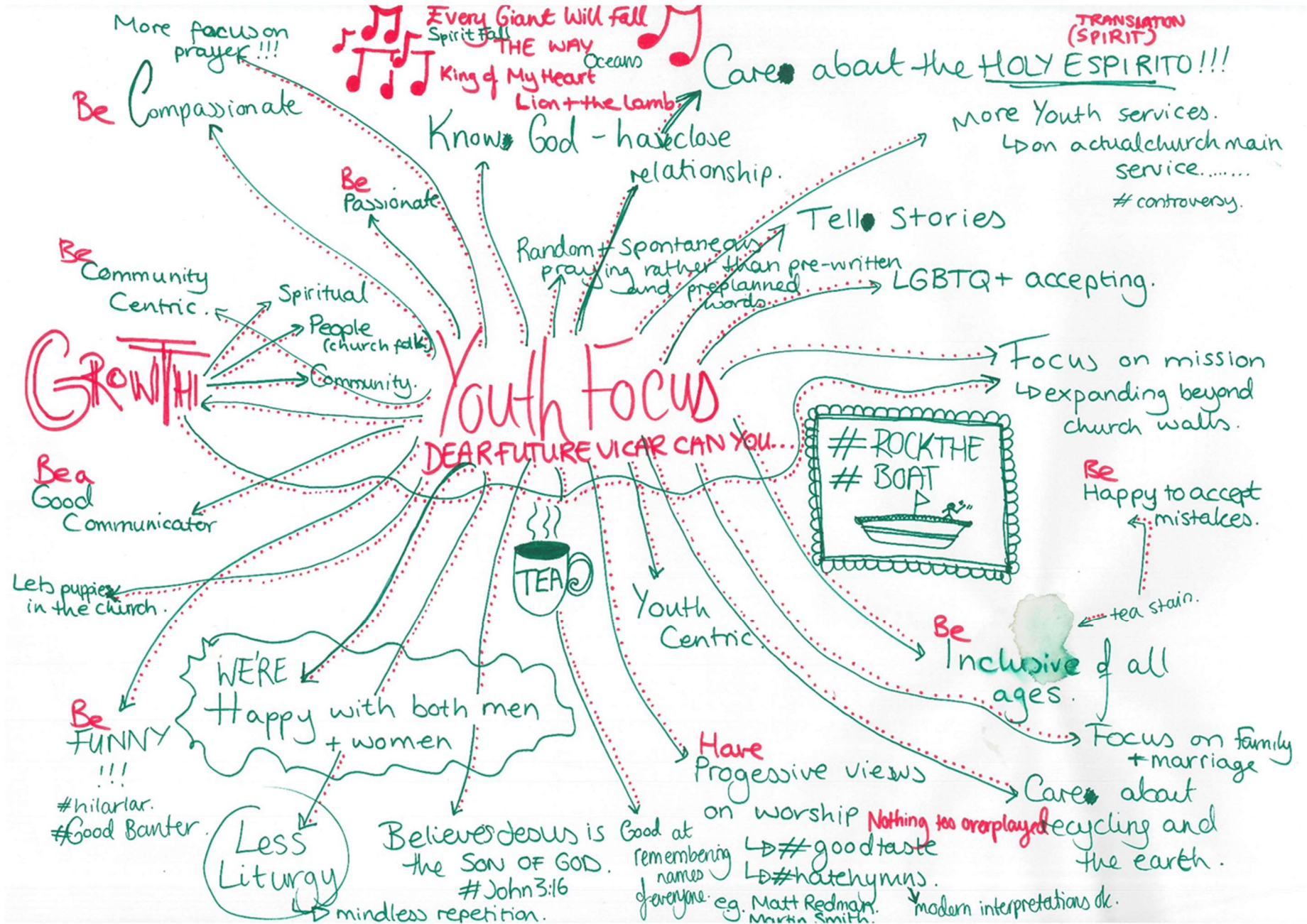
...The mountains quake

before him Nahum 1:5





..... a message from the youth group!.....



# ALL ABOUT WIVEY

thoughts from the congregation

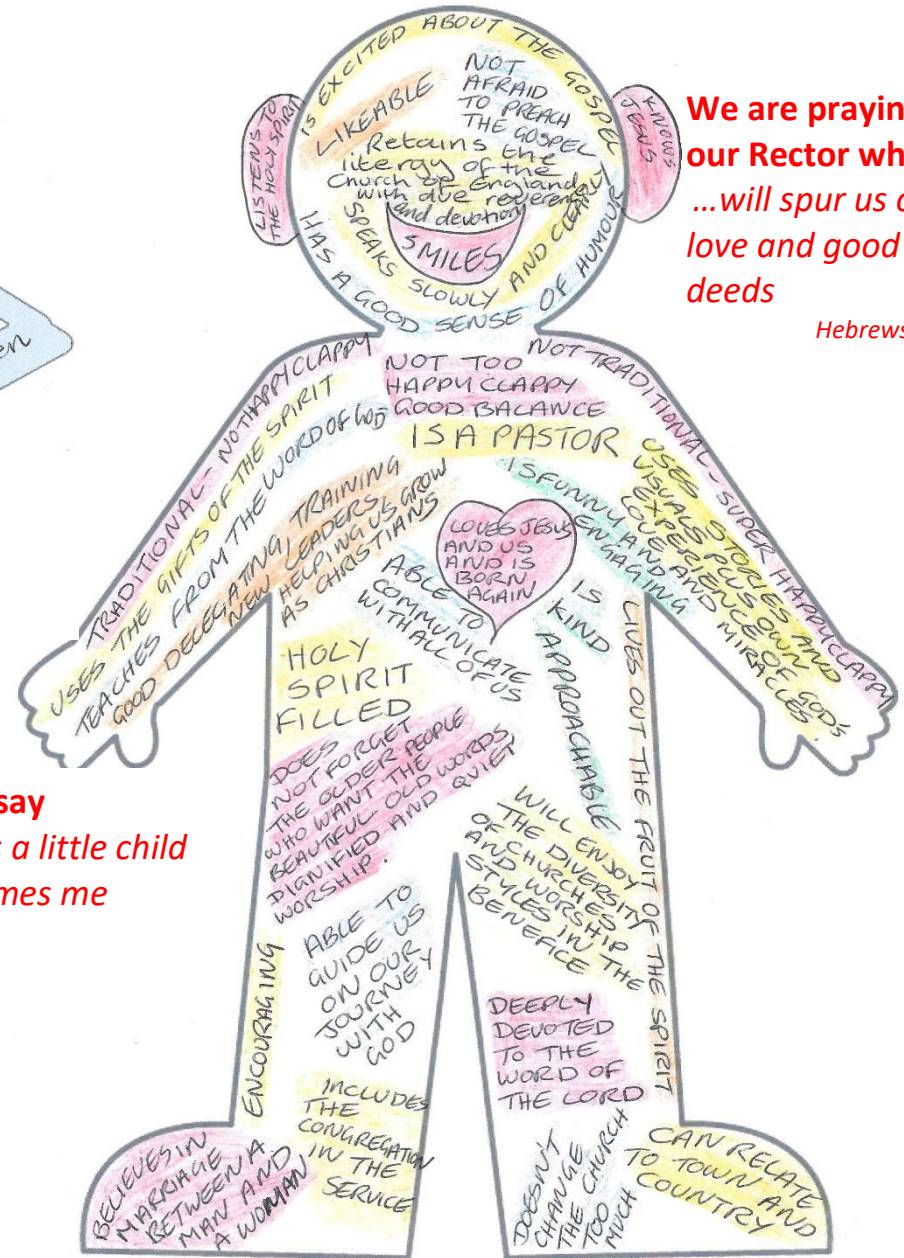
We are heading off to  
...lead me in the way  
everlasting

Psalm 139:24



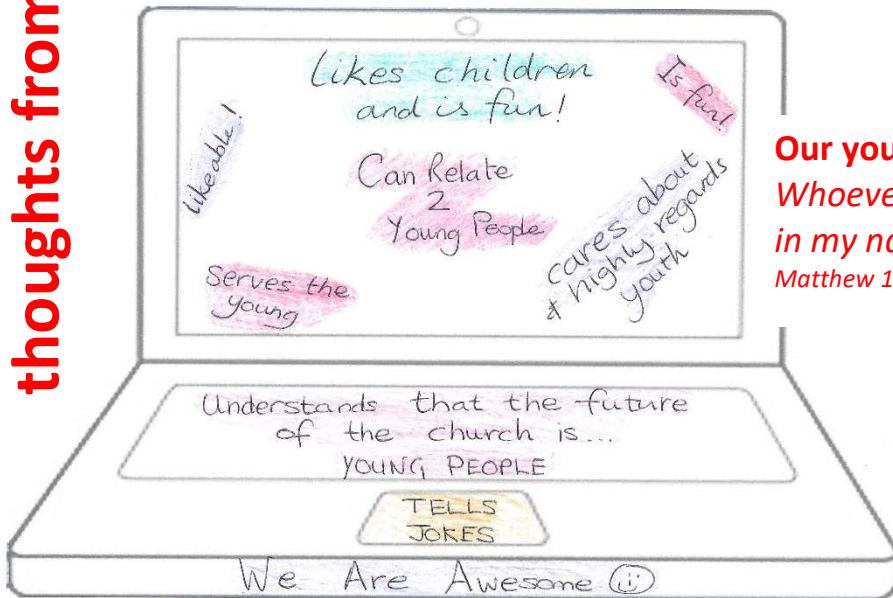
We are praying for  
our Rector who  
...will spur us on to  
love and good  
deeds

Hebrews 10:24



Our young people say  
Whoever welcomes a little child  
in my name, welcomes me

Matthew 18:5



## All about 'The Hills'

Whilst Wiveliscombe provides for day to day requirements such as shopping, the doctors, pubs and schools, hills parishioners tend to look to their own place of worship for their spiritual needs. Many feel more comfortable with the scale and familiarity of their own worship and have deep attachments to their church buildings. They are often the main or only focus for the village, somewhere to mark important family events in the parishes (christenings, weddings, funerals) which makes the churches an essential part of the fabric of rural life. There is generally good support and some movement of congregations between neighbouring hills parishes.

Some hills folk worship regularly at St Andrews, but most are less frequent visitors, perhaps attending bigger services, such as Remembrance or School Carol concerts, once or twice a year. St Andrews is sometimes called upon to provide a larger and more accessible venue for events such as funerals. Similarly, there has been little traffic from St Andrews to the hills churches. This is something that we are looking to improve with potential to move the 5th Sunday benefice service between the parishes.

The St Andrew's congregation also "took to the hills" last summer using the other church buildings for services whilst the reordering was in progress.

### LABOURS OF LOVE

May we meet in God's presence  
And feel his eternal love  
May he guide and give us wisdom  
and light our way from above.

May we work in His service  
In our own small loving ways  
Performing deed of great goodness  
to serve Him all of our days.

May these tasks know God's blessing  
reach out our hands and care  
through mind that is always willing  
And a warm heart true and fair.

May we hear these words wholly  
Thy will be done on Earth  
To fulfil his word and endeavour  
To live a life full of worth.

Denise Broom  
Huish Champflower

## St Peter, Huish Champflower



### WELCOME

As you head for the hills for about 3½ miles from Wivey via Langley Marsh and Maundown you will find Huish. A lovely, quiet hamlet 800 feet above sea level at the foot of the Brendon Hills, surrounded by beautiful countryside.

The population varies in age and faith and come from all walks of life. The village has a hall, cricket team, thriving WI and is currently forming a new social club.



### CHANGING SPACES

Our church building is a versatile space which can easily be adapted to suit different occasions. We have a number of tables and 100 folding chairs (with the pews we can comfortably seat 170 people). This enables us to hold functions such as lunches, concerts and art exhibitions, Christmas fairs, Sunday school, coffee and cake etc. most furniture is 'wheeled' so the interior can be easily changed. The pews are freestanding and can be moved making even greater use of the entire space.

The building is grade 1 listed, it is well loved and cared for. As well as, being a hive of activity, it can also be a place of peace, sanctuary and tranquility.

### WORSHIP - BEFORE AND AFTER....

Our service mornings are usually busy before and after. We try to make time available to spend together enabling the opportunity to share fellowship, hopes, dreams and laughter! We have a quiet corner where there is a more private space should people need to share their concerns, problems and challenges with one another.

### MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK

We have an enthusiastic team and are blessed with people who are willing to read lessons, play the organ, ring the bells, arrange flowers, make cakes and run stalls. We usually hold eight or nine fundraising events a year, have a gift aid scheme and some planned giving. However the gift of time given to us is priceless.

### EVERY DAY IS A DAY FOR GROWING

There is room for and the need for growth. Although young at heart, some of our church family are not as young as they once were. The Sunday school, which has now been running for 30 years, sees its numbers fluctuate and at present is not as well attended.

***Our building is chilly (we pray our hearts are warm!). We would like to install some new heating. If our singing was judged the phrase 'could do better' springs to mind!***

At Saint Peters we pride ourselves on a warm welcome to all, creating a friendly, relaxed and informal atmosphere.

### CREATING MEMORIES

Special services are held for Easter, Harvest and on Christmas Eve Midnight Communion is celebrated, all for which the church is beautifully decorated by the ladies of the Parish.

We hold a fundraising event at Christmas for a different local charity each year and this is lay lead.

The church is the hub and focal point of the community, with fund raising providing opportunities to socialise; amongst these are the Village Fete, Harvest Supper and the other events mentioned.



These occasions are enjoyed by many and are also well supported by parishioners who do not necessarily attend our church services.

***"We look forward to working alongside someone who can bring fresh gifts and talents among us to enable the continuation of God's work and witness to flourish in this place which is very dear to us all."***

## St Marys, Brompton Ralph



*Dog Show at Brompton Ralph*



*Palm Sunday at Brompton Ralph*

**B**eautiful countryside – hills, wooded valleys and green fields.

**R**ange of village events and activities drawing in people from outside the parish.

**O**h what a wonderful peal of six bells! We have many visiting bell-ringing teams.

**M**ost welcoming and friendly place, with its own Village Hall and community-run Village Shop.

**P**CC is small but energetic, and well-supported by others, creating a strong team within the Church.

**T**hough the regular congregation is small, the Church is filled for special services such as Harvest and Christmas.

**O**ur financial outgoings are hard to meet, but we are working to increase planned giving and introduce new events, and the effect is starting to show.

**N**ow that we have a new roof, and refurbished Tower, bells and organ, we are ready for the future.

**R**you the person we need?

**A** caring, wise and motivating person who will

**L**ead us on an equal footing with the other Churches in the Benefice?

**P**erhaps you already understand rural parishes, or are keen to find out.

**H**opefully our Benefice is worth getting to know – we think so!



*Brompton Ralph Village Shop*

## All Saints, Chipstable



Chipstable Parish is made up primarily of two small villages of Chipstable, the smaller and older settlement set in the foothills of the Brendons, and Waterrow, with a mix of old and newer properties situated on the river Tone and on the B3227. It is still primarily a rural area with many farms, some still farmer owned, and others owned by retired people who do not farm themselves. The farming is a mix of arable and livestock and this is an area where country sports are enjoyed.

Chipstable itself is a very small village which in earlier days had its shops, a factory, post office and village school serving the surrounding community. It is now occupied by a mix of working and retired families. It is very community minded, with local lunch clubs, reading groups, craft groups etc.

The principal place of worship is All Saints' Church which is of medieval origin, largely rebuilt in Victorian times. Services are held twice a month, following a pattern of Holy Communion on one Sunday and Evensong on the other. During cold winter months the Holy Communion service is held in someone's home, which is a popular option. Various special services, hymn services, rogation etc. are held through the year.

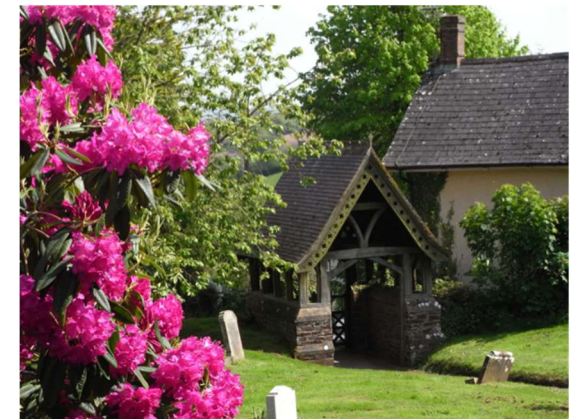


The church represents an important focal point in the community, its fundraising events, are well supported and contribute significantly to parish funds. The church is looked after by a core of volunteers with a paid person to maintain the pretty churchyard.

The residents are attached to their church and even non-churchgoers will contribute generously if funds are needed to carry out repairs. Consequently the church remains very solvent even after carrying out repairs in the quinquennial inspection and other work as becomes necessary.

Visiting is active on an informal basis, and it is a very neighbourly area, where people look out for each other. Coffee is served after all services and non-attenders are always welcome to share with us at that time.

While the congregation in All Saints' is not huge, it remains constant, and special services such as Christmas, Easter, Harvest and Remembrance attract a congregation of up to 80 people.



## Waterrow



### THE VILLAGE HALL

The recently modernised and well-equipped village hall is run by a management committee and a very active centre in the community. The hire fees cover the cost of running the hall.

### WATERROW PRAISE

Once a month we hold a friendly and informal service in the village hall. Various members of the team take part in the service. There is a growing Sunday-school of approx. 8-10 children. The meeting is followed by fellowship and refreshments.

### MESSY CHURCH

Alternative months the service is a “Messy Church” where parents are encouraged to join in the crafts, stories and songs, as we explore the Christian Faith together.



### THE HILLS HOME-GROUP

Once a month there is an opportunity for informal bible-study and prayer. We meet in various homes and we also enjoy a bring and share cooked meal. Every summer we have a BBQ on a local farm and invite families from the surrounding villages.



### OUR VISION

We seek to share the love, joy and peace that we experience in our relationship with Jesus.

We pray that we can teach and inspire people of all ages, to discover God’s love for themselves.

At Waterrow Praise, there is a special focus on local children, to present God’s love in a way that is relevant and exciting.

We hope to improve and develop ministry to those in our community who are lonely, frail and in need.



## St Michael's, Raddington



Raddington is the smallest and most westerly parish in the benefice. It consists of a scattering of farmhouses and cottages set in the hills and steep sided valleys. The church is the main focus for our small rural community and is valued and supported by a far wider circle than those who regularly attend services.

The tiny 13th century, Grade I listed gem of a church, sits on a knoll on a south facing slope. The ancient building is packed with features of architectural interest and beauty.



We welcome visitors from far and wide who are often surprised and delighted to find that the door is always open. St Michael's is a place of pilgrimage, peace and spiritual renewal.

The church has neither water nor electricity which we consider to be a blessing. This also keeps the running costs low! St Michael's is only accessible on foot through the adjoining fields or footpaths. Fortunately, local farmers are on hand to help with transport, whatever the occasion.

Our service pattern has evolved over a period of years by consensus and reflects the preference of the congregation for a more traditional form of worship. Children are always warmly welcomed and included. The church seats around 60 and special services such as Christmas see the church full, often with standing room only.



*A parish family wedding*

The parish finances are currently healthy due to the generosity of our supporters and the fundraising efforts of our PCC. We make a conscious effort to keep up our charitable giving.

In the last ten years over £100,000 has been spent on the church ensuring that the fabric of the building is in good condition. We are up to date with the recommendations of the current quinquennial.

Fundraising events offer the chance to bring new people into the parish and share our place of worship. Over the last few years these have included a weekend music festival, candlelight concert, open gardens and a Christmas fair.



*A Raddington cortège*

We are not complacent about the future, with a largely aging congregation and the limited scope for a more varied use of the building. We hope to continue with services that attract visitors and boost our numbers.

We aspire to maintain the building in good condition, to ensure the church is open and welcoming to all visitors, to continue the pattern of worship and to keep the light of faith burning in our hillside.



*Our door is always open*



## St Mary Magdalene, Clatworthy



Clatworthy, lies to the north of the benefice. The population is about 100 with about 30 living in the village and the remainder spread over scattered properties, mainly livestock farms. There are very few holiday homes/lets. Dominating the landscape is the Wessex Water owned reservoir covering some 130 acres providing a charming 5½ mile circular walk and fly fishing for trout.

### CHURCH BUILDING AND VILLAGE HALL

The parish church of St. Mary Magdalene in the village centre dates from the 12th century and is built of rendered stone. The roof is sound. The interior bears the marks of age but the recent 5 yearly survey did not identify any major works. The four bells date from the 16th and 17th centuries and are in good condition. There is no electricity supply. Heating is by cylinder gas. Winter evening services lit by candles and oil lamps are very atmospheric. The churchyard is well kept and, in the spring, produces a fine display of miniature daffodils.

The Village Hall, bought from the diocese by the villagers in the 1980s, is also in the village centre and is used for church as well as other village functions. The only other gathering points are the Brendon Hill Methodist Church, geographically just out of the parish but attended by Clatworthy residents and Raleigh's Cross Inn, a large hostelry with a wedding license at 1200 ft. on the ridge route across the Brendon Hills

### FINANCE

Collections, donations and planned giving are just about sufficient to finance the parish share which is always paid in full. Other expenditure is financed by regular fundraising / social events like the Christmas Market, harvest supper and cream teas in the village hall where the friendly and relaxed atmosphere attracts both Clatworthy parishioners and others from neighbouring villages who see the church as an important part of local society but not one they wish to attend on a regular basis.

### SERVICES AND OUTREACH

The vital assistance in the form of lay readers and retired clergy applies throughout the benefice except that one retired priest living in Clatworthy prefers to give help just in that parish. We are lucky to have the services of an experienced organist Colin Snow from Huish Champflower who pays the foot-powered harmonium, an important part of our worship.



### FINANCE

Like the rest of the benefice, we support the mission in Zambia. Otherwise, our small charitable giving has recently centred on the Society of Mary and Martha, a retreat for clergy, Farm Crisis Network and the rural support activities of the Somerset Community Foundation. Coincidentally, one of the stained glass windows on the south side features Mary and Martha washing our Lord's feet

## St John the Baptist, Tolland



### TOLLAND

The parish of Tolland is a small community with a population currently c.80, including a small number of children (c.11). The residents are a good mix of those working in nearby cities and towns, farmers and retired. Most houses are the occupants' main residence and are generally permanently occupied.

### OUR CHURCH BUILDING

The Church which is Grade II listed dates from the C13 and was remodelled in 1871 by C.E. Giles.

It has a 3 bay nave with North aisle and vestry, South porch, West tower and a rood stair turret on the South side. The fabric of the church is in good condition and there was a quinquennial inspection in 2008, with no major work requirements. A peal of 8 bells has fairly recently been installed and one original bell dating back to C13 has been rehung.

### SERVICES.

Tolland has approximately 8 Sunday services a year, most of which are a little different to the norm but all are special. In 2017 we have had: Mothering Sunday Service (28 attendees); Rogation Service (10); Ascension Communion Service (6); Pet Service (27), Benefice Service (53); Harvest Festival Service (20); Remembrance Service (20); and finally a Christmas day Carol Service (generally 50+).



*Bell  
Dedication  
Service in  
2009*

Services combine tradition with informality and enjoyment. Traditional vestments are worn by the Priest although the congregation's attire varies between formal and informal a nice mix and a broad appeal. The services encourage participation and are relevant and personal to our daily lives.

***"We believe we have found a successful formula to develop interest in the church and look to continue this approach."***

Members of the congregation usually read the lessons and assist at communion.

This approach has borne dividends and attendance levels have increased in 6 years from around 8 to over 30. This has been an incredible turn-around and we know that our approach is working, as attendance levels increase and involvement and interest grows.

The parish has appeared in a national DVD, "Fresh Expressions" showing how Churches in rural areas are adapting to change.

### CONGREGATION

Attendance is good as the villagers are keen to keep their church open. It is well supported from neighbouring parishes.

### FINANCE

Finance is a constant challenge and we have been operating with a deficit and we have had to draw upon reserves, which is not a long term option. The Parish share represents almost a half of our annual expenditure, making further annual fundraising essential. This last year we have had a Tolland Bash, which raised c £1,500 and 2 coffee mornings raising around £400.

### OPPORTUNITY FOR DEVELOPMENT

We'd like to use the church more. It is our only communal building and we have successfully run small fundraising concerts there in the past and have plans for a Camino de Santiago presentation in 2018, the 500mile walk having been undertaken by one of the residents.

**THE HILLS - WE CAN OFFER:**

- An opportunity to minister in a range of unique and well maintained churches in a beautiful part of Somerset.
- Capable and reliable teams who deal with the day to day running of each church.
- A rich and imaginative range of worship, many of the special services instigated and organised by the local PCC's.
- Sunday schools in two of the hills parishes.
- A group of helpful, practical and supportive church wardens.

**WE WOULD LIKE AN INCUMBENT WHO WILL:-**

- Appreciate and understand our rural way of life.
- Lead us and nurture our quiet yet deep rooted faith, developing a strong community of believers.
- Value the smaller parishes on an equal footing with Wiveliscombe and, when time allows, participate in the life of our villages.
- Be flexible, open to and comfortable with different styles of worship across the benefice.
- Be kind, caring, cheerful and someone we can engage with as a person.
- Understand the problems facing small, rural communities, and have ideas about growing our congregations and developing a younger church membership;
- Be a preacher to inspire, give concise sermons and speak well so that everyone can hear.
- Be prepared to spend time travelling amongst the rural parishes – good reversing skills a must!

**ST ANDREW'S - WE CAN OFFER:**

We are really excited for what the next steps will be for our church. Our congregation has grown in numbers, faithfulness and prayer and we have a fantastic part reordered parish church which is already giving fresh enthusiasm and opportunities for mission. We hope to continue to grow in faith, unity and fruitfulness whilst bringing new people of all ages to Christ to become a true all age church.

We hope that you have a good impression of the enthusiasm and skills we can offer from reading about St Andrew's. Here are a few final thoughts inspired by our most recent PCC meeting:

*We broke into smaller groups to pray in three areas of the church that are still unsettled after the disruption of the reordering.*

- *The group in the tower room thought of the young people who will meet there and of those outside the church who may come in that way for the first time.*
- *The group in the book area considered how we need more intimate spaces in which people can pray together and to display welcoming Christian literature for those who visit the church and are open to exploring what our faith is all about.*
- *The group in the Lady Chapel talked about the need for a quiet prayerful space for people to be alone with God and to remember loved ones who are unwell or have passed away.*

***All of us felt some excitement at what God has already done and what He is still to do in us and through us here in Wivey.***

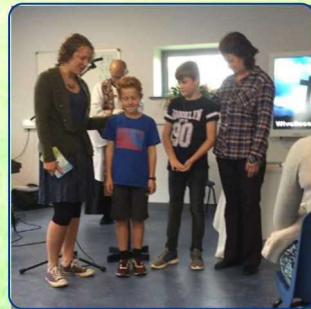
In addition to the qualities already identified by our friends in the Hills we seek a rector who

- Will share this excitement, foster it in others and bring some vision and ideas of their own
- Is a team player who is able to lead and develop others to bring the best out of them
- Is deeply rooted in a strong personal faith and love of Jesus, and can help this grow in others
- Can ensure there is good teaching, week in and week out, to help us all grow

**TOGETHER WE ARE PRAYING FOR A RECTOR WHO WILL GRACIOUSLY CELEBRATE AND ENJOY THE VARIETY WITHIN ALL THE CHURCHES IN OUR BENEFICE.**

*'... we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.*

*Ephesians 4: 15-16*



There is only so much information we can get in our benefice profile and there is so much more to tell!

If you would like to know more look at our benefice website [www.wiveychurches.org.uk](http://www.wiveychurches.org.uk)

or **Facebook** [www.facebook.com/standrewswiveliscombe/](http://www.facebook.com/standrewswiveliscombe/)  
or **Twitter** [www.twitter.com/WiveyStAndrews](http://www.twitter.com/WiveyStAndrews)

Also [www.wiveliscombe.com](http://www.wiveliscombe.com) or [www.waterrow.org.uk](http://www.waterrow.org.uk)



*"We look forward to meeting you!"*

Cover photo – Gabriel Smy  
Other photos – [www.wiveychurches.org.uk](http://www.wiveychurches.org.uk)