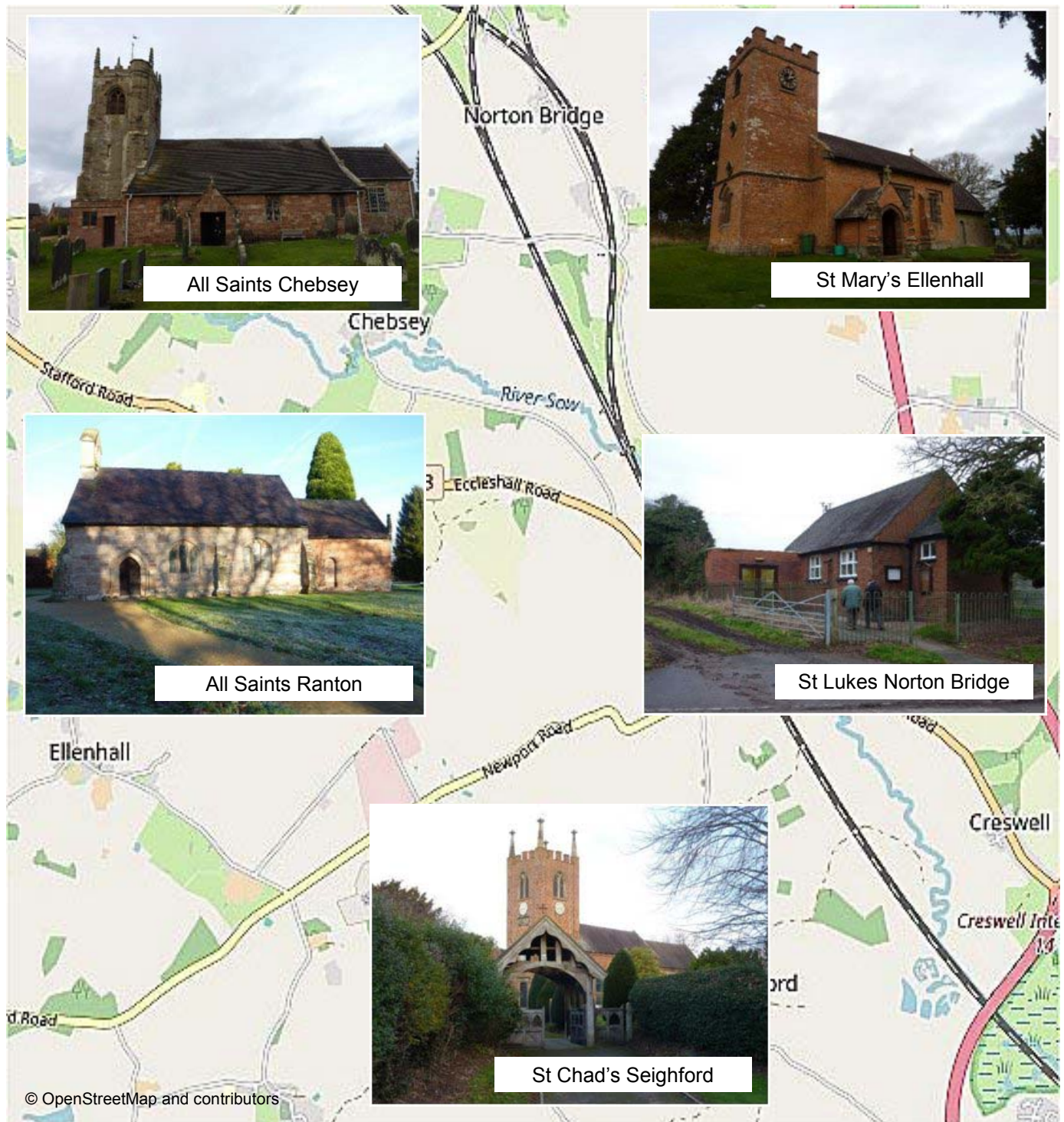


The Benefice of Chebsey with Norton Bridge , Ellenhall, Ranton, and Seighford with Creswell



Profile

Contents

Page 1	Welcome The Context
Page 2	Our Vision
Page 3	Why Come To Our Benefice Role Description Person Specification
Page 4	The Vicarage Leisure and Wellbeing Mission
Page 7	Life in the Parishes Page 7 Seighford With Creswell Page 10 Chebsey With Norton Bridge Page 12 Ranton Page 14 Ellenhall
Page 15	Parish Finance and Governance
Page 15	Pattern of Worship Sundays and Weekdays
Page 16	Special Services Bells

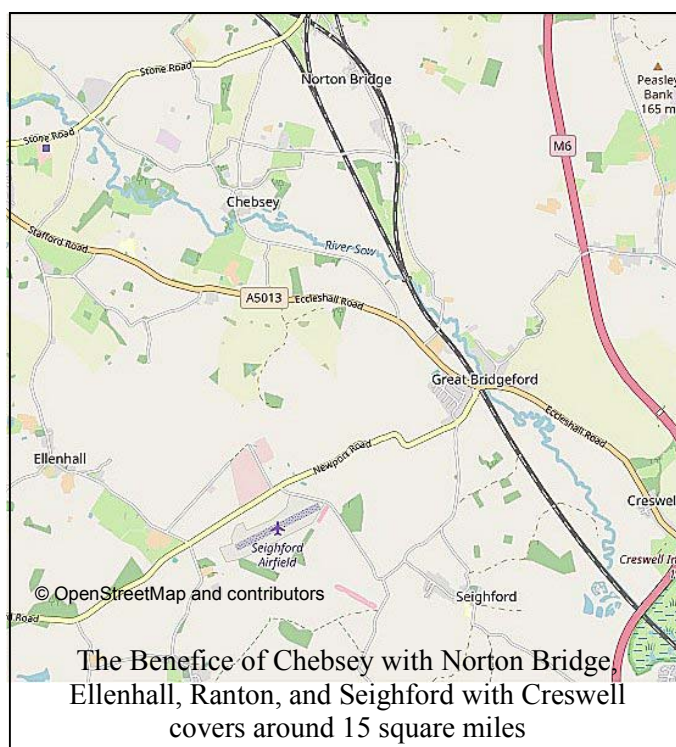
Welcome

Welcome to our benefice comprising four warm and friendly parishes; Chebsey with Norton Bridge, Ellenhall, Ranton, and Seighford with Creswell. All four parishes are very accessible, rural communities being close to junction 14 of the M6 and enjoying excellent rail links from Stafford on the West Coast Mainline.

The Context

In total, the area of the Benefice is around 15 square miles, all of which is served by good roads. The Benefice in its current form has existed since 2002 when Ranton joined the existing Benefice which was established in 1986. All four parishes are within the Deanery of Eccleshall and the Diocese of Lichfield.

Agriculture is an important feature of each parish with their many scattered farms and some isolated properties. However, the bulk of the residents live in several villages of various sizes with Great Bridgeford being the largest (pop. 700), Seighford (pop. 250), Chebsey (pop. 125), Ranton (pop. 320), Ellenhall (pop. 150), and Norton Bridge (pop. 170).



Two primary schools are located within the Benefice, one at Seighford and the other at Ranton. While catering for local children, many come from outside the Benefice. Secondary schools are located in Stafford with many children travelling by transport (provided either by the County Council or the schools themselves). There is also a well-respected College of Further Education in Stafford.

There are no shops within the Benefice but there are ample in nearby Eccleshall (5 miles distant) and even more in Stafford which lies only 4

miles (10 minutes by car) to the south-east of Seighford. The latter, being the County Town, has a wide variety of shops ranging from national chain supermarkets to local independent stores. Stafford also has a variety of hotels, public houses and eating establishments. Eccleshall has a supermarket, independent shops and a number of popular public houses and restaurants. Bearing these things in mind suggests that access to a car is needed for living and ministry in this location.

Seighford has a well-supported community owned public house 'The Holly Bush Inn' which supports St Chad's, Seighford, with its fundraising activities.

There are GP surgeries in both Stafford and Eccleshall. Stafford is also home to the County Hospital.

Our Vision

We believe God is calling us to grow as a benefice that is outward - looking, supportive of each other, and rooted in our local communities.

Our shared vision is...

- to see the Benefice grow and flourish together
- to be even more effective in integrating the life of our villages with the worshiping life of the Church,
- to equip our congregations to grow in discipleship, gifts, and skills for outreach into our communities
- to develop collaborative ways of working across the benefice to release time and energy for mission
- to deepen our engagement with our schools.

Why come to our Benefice?...

Our benefice is friendly, co-operative, and welcoming. We are ambitious in developing creative ways to evangelize and serve whilst meeting the spiritual needs of our parish communities.

All expenses are paid in full, and we are supportive and respectful of holidays and days off.

Role Description

We're looking for a priest who will...

- lead the Benefice in growing and flourishing, spiritually and numerically
- develop mutually beneficial relationships with our schools
- encourage and further develop lay participation in services and benefice roles
- help us grow as disciples of Christ
- respect the distinctive characteristic of each parish
- help us explore new opportunities within worship and mission, lead collaboratively and help us build on what is already good.

Person Specification

We're looking for a priest who is...

- energetic, enthusiastic and creative
- experienced and able to lead collaboratively in building an effective a team
- comfortable working amongst older people and values what maturity and life experience brings
- a pastor, at heart
- has experience of developing beneficial relationships with schools
- is comfortable with ministry within a rural environment
- respects traditions and can sensitively offer fresh opportunities for us to share our Christian message
- be a good listener and have a strong and healthy sense of humour.

The Vicarage

The house provided to make your home is a four-bedroom, detached property with a large lounge, dining kitchen, and study. It is on the edge of Seighford, immediately adjacent to the church with views over open countryside; the building has recently undergone some internal refurbishment. Internal decoration will be carried out when an appointment is made so that options will be to the taste of its new inhabitants.



The modern four-bedroom detached Vicarage is located immediately adjacent the Church in Seighford and offers extensive views across open countryside

Leisure and Wellbeing

To bring opportunities for balance to your work, beyond the attraction of the local countryside, within a radius of 10 or so miles from the vicarage, access by car is easily possible to the likes of Trentham Gardens for relaxation and shopping, Cannock Chase for walking, the Gatehouse Theatre (Stafford), numerous garden centres, leisure centres with swimming pools, and golf courses.

Mission

Local Mission

Great importance is placed on the Church's role as a channel of Christ's mission. We seek to develop our own community life and to nurture the faith of church members, whilst at the same time reaching out to the wider communities in the villages. We are aware of the missional possibilities for individual church members, growing in discipleship and living their daily lives as a Christian presence in the wider world.

There is a strong sense of fellowship within the congregation, spanning the generations, leading to a friendly atmosphere and warm relationships. This has been built up over the years with our united services and finds expression in a variety of ways. The level of concern people have for one another is reflected in the way they care for each other and go out of their way to offer support.

Within the parishes, the vast majority are believed to be Christian but, as elsewhere, tend not attend church. The Christmas Carol Services and Remembrance Services are well attended and are key to communicating the Word of the Lord.

Our current wide range of events already attract many who would otherwise have little reason to take part in church life; the fellowship generated by these events not only enhances the life of the Church but also helps to build links with the wider community both in the parish and beyond.

A continuing and successful initiative has been 'Prayer and a Pint', which enables the Incumbent and church members to connect with the wider community. Individual parishes also support other charities such as RABI and the Farming Support Network amongst others reflecting our rural situation.

Children's Society

One of our parishes has links with the Children's Society. For many years CS boxes have been a regular means of support. In Chebsey these are collected each year.

All Saint's Ranton has always held a Christingle Service at the beginning of Advent. This is done in conjunction with the school which now prepares most of the service. Envelopes and collecting boxes are made available in the weeks prior to the service.

World Mission

Our support for World Mission on a small charity working in Romania, 'Light for Children.' A young woman, Helen Cosman and her Romanian husband, Costel live and work in Dorohoi, a small town in northern Romania. They support about 150 orphan children in the State system, which has developed out of the original 40 orphans in an orphanage at nearby Dersca. Helen's home church is St John's, Chase Terrace, also in Lichfield Diocese, but the Lord brought us into contact with her and made it clear that we should support her in her mission work.

Our involvement stretches back some 20 years when a group of teenagers did a sponsored swim at Christmas time in a privately owned pool in Chebsey Parish. In the past visits have been made by groups of people from our churches to meet children and other vulnerable people, to do practical work and discover first-hand Helen and Costel's work. Both

Chebsey and Seighford have donated proportionately to 'Light for Children' from their regular income.

Africa Enterprise

A former vicar's son worked with 'Africa Enterprise', an evangelistic organization seeking to bring the Gospel to people in African cities. Prior to his retirement, he made preaching visits and subsequently St Mary's Ellenhall has supported this particular mission.

Parish Magazine

The Parish Magazine is published 10 times a year (July & August and December & January being joint issues). It has a circulation of about 400 and acts not only as an information channel for the churches, but also for the community. Advertisement space is sold to local businesses. The magazine, printed professionally by a local printer, is compiled by an editor and delivered across the parishes by a team of 15-20 volunteers.



Coffee and a chat after the Service is an important part of fellowship within the Benefice

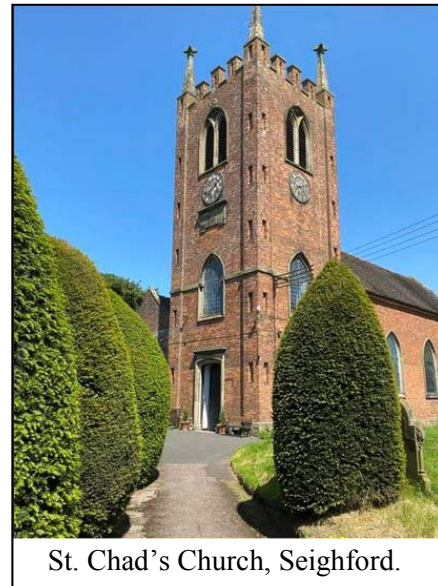
Life in the Parishes

Seighford with Creswell.

This Parish consists of four distinct areas of housing - Seighford Village, Great Bridgeford, Creswell together with the hamlet of Coton Clanford. Seighford is an old village of largely residential housing with some rented accommodation. The land and farms in and around the village are owned by the Trustees of the Seighford Settled Estate of which James Eld is life tenant and he is also one of the patrons of the Living.

Great Bridgeford is the largest community in the Parish with its inter-war ribbon development and further development carried out between 1960 and 1990. A high proportion of the post war developments are bungalows which by their very nature attract many retired and elderly people.

Creswell lies on the outskirts of Stafford adjacent to Junction 14 of the M6 and although in part is within Seighford Parish being close to Stafford more naturally relates to that community.



St. Chad's Church, Seighford.



Church Building

St Chad's Church, Seighford is a Grade 2* listed building and seats 180 people. It is in the centre of the village. A kitchen and toilet were installed in 2000 and a new heating system in 2007. Inner glass doors have been fitted to the porch and this has made it into a display and crèche retreat. Part

of the north aisle has been cleared of pews, and having been carpeted is currently used as a play area for children during services.

School

Cooper Perry Primary School is situated opposite Seighford Church and has a roll of 200 pupils. 75% of children come from outside of the catchment area, mainly from the edge of Stafford and other villages. Previous incumbents have been welcomed for regular assemblies, and the school likes to use the church for special services.



Seighford County School, was founded in 1874 and has since been renamed Cooper Perry School. The school is named after Sir Edwin Cooper Perry, physician and medical administrator, who spent his childhood in the Village

Village Halls

There is a small village hall which is supported by an enthusiastic volunteer committee. It is used weekly for a 'drop-in' coffee morning and holds regular events. It is hired for private functions such as birthday parties, weekly private yoga sessions, and a gardening club. It is used by the Parish Council for their meetings and also as a Polling Station for elections.

There is a large two-roomed village hall at Great Bridgeford which is extensively used by the local community and is let for private parties and other functions. It is run by an active volunteer committee. Activities such as concerts, dances, coffee mornings, a range of leisure activities, and a playgroup take place in the hall. It is also used by the Parish Council for their meetings and as a Polling Station for elections. Adjacent to the Hall are two hard surface tennis courts - the home of Great Bridgeford Tennis Club which encourages residents to join and use the facilities.

The Holly Bush Inn

The Holly Bush Inn is a 17th Century community owned public house in Seighford. It is well used by local residents and has an excellent reputation for Sunday lunches and bar food. This is where the 'Prayer and a Pint' group meets on Thursday evenings after a short service in the church. A draw held in the Holly Bush every Friday night by the Seighford St Chad's Friends Association with all profits going to support the church.

Seighford St Chad's Friends Association

St Chad's Friends Association, a registered charity, was set up in 2024 to raise funds to help with the maintenance of the church building. Substantial funds have been raised since its inception through concerts, a dog show, summer fete and a weekly lottery amongst other things.



Chebsey with Norton Bridge

There are two distinct communities in the Parish, namely the old village of Chebsey with the Parish Church of All Saints' at its heart and a former railway community at Norton Bridge that has a mission church, St Luke's.

Chebsey is a mixture of smart housing, ex-local authority properties and a few cottages. Norton Bridge is nearly all former council housing. Shallowford, Cold Norton and Hilcote are small hamlets.



All Saints' Chebsey

Church Buildings



St. Luke's, Norton Bridge

All Saints' Church, Chebsey is Grade 1 listed and seats 100 people. Toilet facilities were installed about 8 years ago. The Quinquennial Report has recently been carried out and there are no major works required although repairs to the roof and flashing need to be undertaken.

St. Luke's at Norton Bridge is a dual-purpose building serving the community as its church and also as its village hall. It has recently been completely refurbished following an electrical fire.

Easter Morning service at All Saints' Chebsey



Community Facilities

Chebsey has a parish hall which is used for church social functions such as the harvest lunch. A small and active committee organizes varied social events including concerts and exhibitions.

At Norton Bridge, St. Luke's runs a weekly drop-in coffee morning which attracts a regular attendance of over 20. It is also used for community events such as Parish Council Meetings and as a Polling Station for elections.



Chebsey Harvest Lunch in the Parish Hall



Generations of the same family have worshipped in the Benefice

Ranton

Ranton's housing is concentrated in three cul-de-sacs and one road leading to the school and is, in the main, of a 1980's executive style with some improved cottages and some council housing. There are two hamlets, Ranton Green and Long Compton. The village has regular community events and supports the church with its fundraising activities.



All Saints', Ranton



Volunteers working to tidy Ranton Churchyard

Buildings & Facilities

All Saints' Church, Ranton is Grade 2 listed and seats 70 people. New lighting and an oil-fired heating system has been installed along with kitchen facilities at the rear of the church, French drains around the building to reduce the damp, and a P.A. System. The chancel furniture was removed, and a new Communion Table and kneeler installed with carpet

throughout the Chancel.

There is a large well-kept churchyard which is regularly used by parishioners for exercise. The exterior grass pathways have been replaced with bricks. The Churchyard is maintained, throughout the year, by a volunteer group of local residents.

The Quinquennial report was completed in April 2025. There were no major items but there is some re-pointing that was required along with other fairly minor repairs.

School

All Saints CE Primary School is a co-educational Church of England School and has approximately 60 pupils with a capacity for 70. There is an opportunity for the Incumbent to be a member of the Board of Governors. Involvement in all aspects of the school's life, including the leading of assemblies, is welcomed.



All Saints CE (C) School where the Incumbent would be a school Governor

Village Hall

The former school, opposite the Church, is now a well-maintained village hall run by a volunteer committee. It is used for community functions including concerts, quizzes, and talks. The Village Hall is also used for fundraising events for the church such as the Harvest Supper and supports the church by giving donations each year from its profits. The Parish Council also meets in the Hall.

Local residents at last years Harvest Supper in Ranton Village Hall. This annual event raises valuable funds for All Saints' Church



Ellenhall

This is the smallest (by population) village within the Benefice. It is a loose cluster of housing and working farms, much of which was formally owned by the Lichfield Estate. The Estate was sold, following the death of the 5th Earl of Lichfield in 2005. Farms and housing are now in private hands.



St Mary's, Ellenhall

There is a 'hamlet' at Broadheath, along the main road from Great Bridgeford to Woodseaves.

Buildings & Facilities

St Mary's Church, Ellenhall is Grade 2 listed and seats 70 people on pews. Some 20 years ago, the Chancel roof was replaced, French drains installed around the outside to reduce the damp, and a new wood block floor installed. The work was mainly funded by English Heritage Trust.



Parish Administration and Governance

Each parish manages to elect a PCC; they are of differing sizes, but have the statutory, ex-officio roles covered including those of Deanery Synod Representatives. PCCs generally meet quarterly.

Things are done in common wherever possible to improve governance and help consistency. Churchwardens meet regularly with the Incumbent, to plan and review matters common to all parishes. Similarly, meetings for treasurers are held to address common matters of finance.

The current Electoral Roll numbers stand at: Chebsey 56, Ellenhall 11, Ranton 16, Seighford 32

Patterns of Worship

Sundays and Weekdays

The Benefice uses Common Worship for its regular services which take an informal style. Hymns and songs are from 'SingGlory' at Seighford and Ellenhall, 'Complete Anglican Hymns Old & New' at Chebsey, and 'Junior Praise' plus 'Hymns Ancient & Modern New Standard' at Ranton. There is a very dedicated organist who plays at all services and a choir of about 14 supports the services held at Seighford. The choir sings at festival services and are also pleased to sing for weddings.

We try to be inclusive and there is a strong commitment to afford opportunities to involve as many people as possible within worship activities, whether that be through reading, leading intercessions, serving at the altar, or bell ringing.

We are warm and welcoming to all and offer following Sunday services to promote friendship and fellowship.

We maintain an open approach in our response to requests for baptisms, weddings or funerals on the understanding that such occasional offices provide golden opportunities for mission, both in terms of evangelism and pastoral care.

Occasional offices during 2025 were:-

Parish	Funerals	Weddings	Baptisms
Seighford with Creswell	5	1	1
Chebsey with Norton Bridge	3	1	2
Ranton	2	1	2
Ellenall	1	0	0

Currently there is one service for the whole benefice each Sunday at 10.00am. This service moves around the churches alphabetically i.e. in the order of Chebsey, Ellenhall, Ranton, and Seighford. Services at Norton Bridge are held when there is a fifth Sunday in the month. This began during the last vacancy due to difficulties in covering services; this has continued, to everyone's satisfaction throughout the last incumbency. Worshippers average about 30 each Sunday, though this number increases significantly for special occasions.

There has been a mid-week communion service on Thursday morning and normally a 'Prayer and a Pint' service on the same evening at Seighford. These services attract 8-10 each week. The Thursday evening service has been suspended during the current vacancy.

Special Services

Throughout the year there are a number of Special Services including, Mothering Sunday, Easter Day, Harvest, Memorial Service, Remembrance Sunday, Christingle and Carol Services.

Bells

Both All Saints, Chebsey (4 bells) and St Chad's Seighford (6 bells) have bells to ring. A small group of ringers are happy to ring for weddings, but otherwise the bells are not used regularly. At Seighford, however, there is a faithful and keen band of ringers who normally practice on Friday evenings and ring for all services.

The other churches are within easy travelling distance of the Vicarage, each being approximately two and a half miles away. Travelling expenses are paid by the Parishes.

