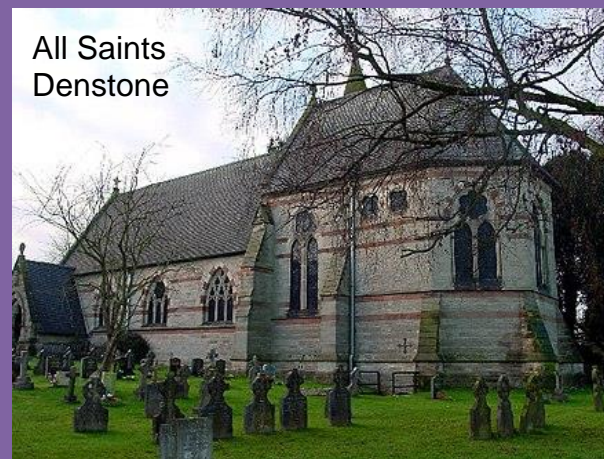


The Dove and Churnet Benefice

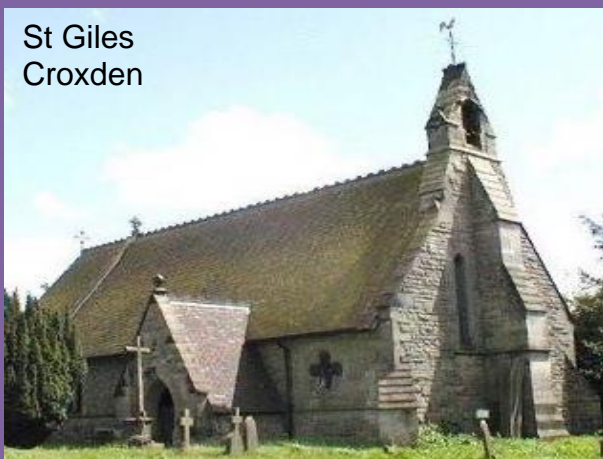
St Michael's
Rocester



All Saints
Denstone



St Giles
Croxden



St John's
Hollington



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Introduction



We pray that our next Vicar will lead God's family in our Benefice to flourish and grow as Spirit-filled, disciplined individuals, and as a true Christian community.

We look forward to working with them; we do not expect them to be perfect, nor that they will have the answer to every challenge.

We pray they will:

- be engaging and inspiring.
- understand the challenges of leading the varied communities within the Benefice.
- be able to forge closer links across the Benefice churches and community organisations.
- have a heart for and be able to help us develop different forms of worship, introducing new ones where needed.

A Message from our Churchwardens

“And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me. And anyone who welcomes a little child like this on my behalf is welcoming me”.

Welcome to Our Benefice!

The Dove and Churnet Benefice is made up of four Parishes: All Saints Church, Denstone, St Michael's Church, Rocester, St Giles' Church, Croxden and St John's Church, Hollington.

Each of these has its own character and context. Denstone and Rocester are in a semi-rural industrial area with the World Headquarters of JCB pivotal to the life of the surrounding villages. Rocester is also the setting for the JCB Academy. Croxden is a beautiful hamlet set beside the 12th century Croxden Abbey and Hollington is a smaller residential/ dormitory village.

We hope that this profile gives you a feel for what our Benefice is about: who we are, what we do, and how we want to develop our faith and our churches.

We also hope and pray that you might discern whether our Benefice could be part of your own vocational journey of faith: where your gifts, skills and efforts can complement ours, for the greater glory of God, and the further development of Jesus's work on earth.

We are looking for someone who will lead us to achieve Church community growth by reaching more widely into our communities and continuing to develop our work in the local schools. God's work is never done, and we know that there is so much more that we could be doing to build his kingdom here in the Benefice.



Our Vision for the Benefice

We believe that the Church is those who have been baptised into Christ and who make up the body of Christ.

St Paul in 1 Corinthians 12 -27 declares “Now you are the **body of Christ**, and each one of you is a part of it”

In this Benefice, individually and together we are all equal participants in God's mission.

This understanding of “Every Member Ministry” has been at the heart of the Benefice's identity over many years.

We have a vision for a bold and courageous Benefice family, where youth and children are a key part of our future. A Benefice where we are equipped to act as witnesses to Jesus and where we are comfortable contributing to the life of the church through service or leadership roles.

We want to create a Benefice where we can have confidence to develop, explore and express the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

We want to use social media more broadly and effectively, to connect with some of those who we are not currently reaching, enabling people to discover more about the how we live our faith. We want to be collectively prayerful, as a key to spiritual growth, offering people different opportunities to have a more active relationship with Jesus through prayer.

We have no doubt that with prayer and strong leadership, we can live out our calling to know Jesus, to do his work and to grow new disciples.



Lichfield Diocese



The Diocese of Lichfield in 2019 detailed three priority areas: developing discipleship, encouraging vocation, and inspiring evangelism as part of their vision of mission and ministry.

It is one of the most diverse dioceses in the country. Rolling countryside and vibrant inner-city life nestle together in a region that takes in Staffordshire, the Potteries of Stoke-on-Trent, most of Shropshire and bustling Black Country centres including Walsall and Wolverhampton. The only thing we don't have is the sea!

The shared diocesan vision extends an invitation to all to
"Come follow Christ in the footsteps of St Chad".

Our diocesan prayer is: As we follow Christ in the footsteps of St Chad, we pray that the two million people in our diocese encounter a church that is confident in the gospel, knows and loves its communities, and is excited to find God at work already in the world. We pray for a church that reflects the richness and variety of those communities and partners with others in seeking the common good, working for justice as a people of hope.

The Lichfield Diocese has a structured programme of training and support, alongside the Church of England's national development framework.

For more information visit:

<https://www.lichfield.anglican.org/vocations-and-training/training/>

<https://www.churchofengland.org/search-results?keys=training>

Further information about the Diocese is available at <https://www.lichfield.anglican.org/>

Uttoxeter Deanery has 3 benefices - the Uttoxeter Area Team ministry (with 10 churches) to the south, our benefice, and the Weaver Benefice (with 5 churches) to the north.

The Rural Dean and an associate minister lead the Weaver Benefice which has an excellent relationship with the Dove and Churnet Benefice, where we support each other with taking occasional offices or midweek services during holidays as necessary.

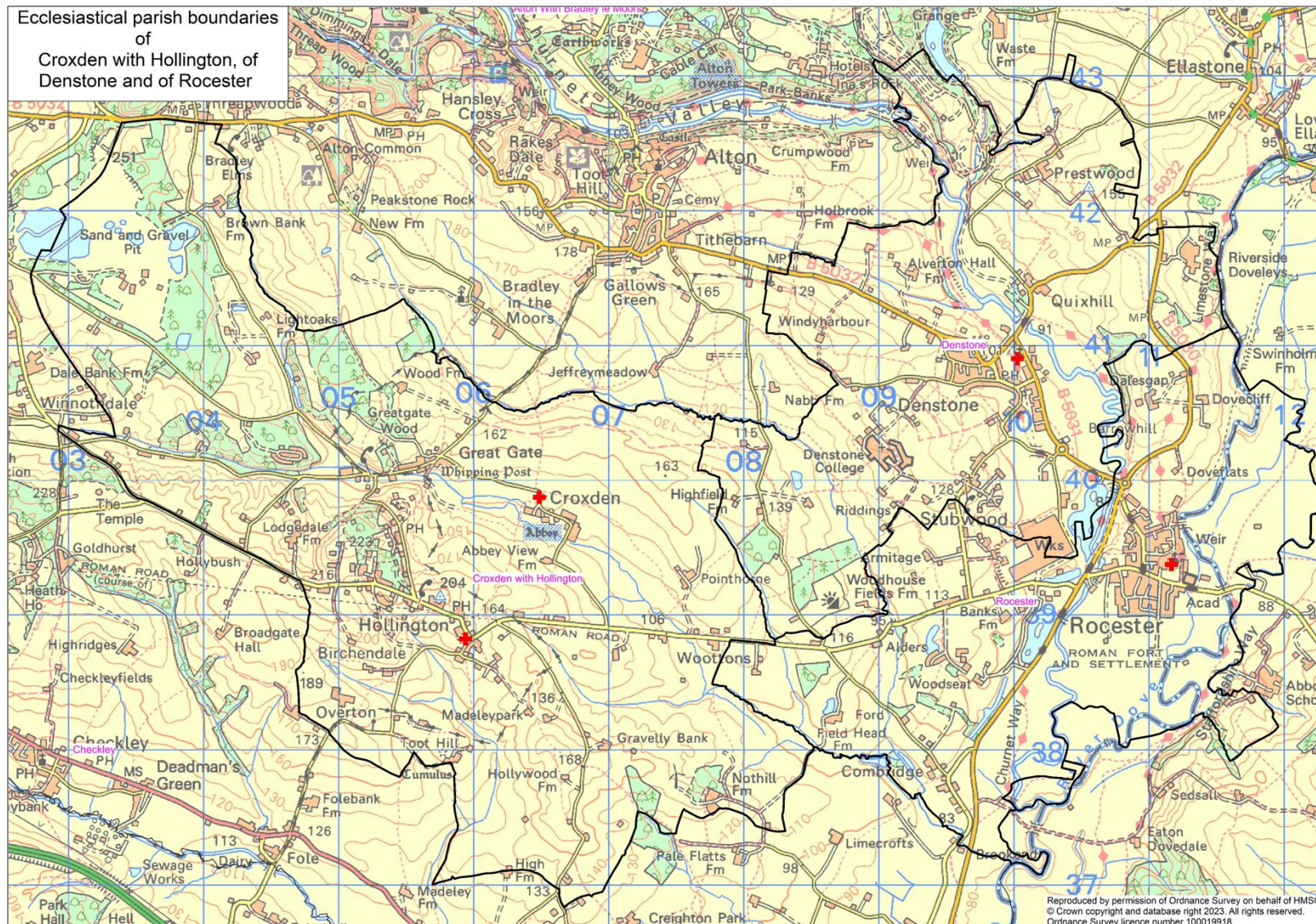
There is much shared history across the Deanery and great employment opportunities in a range of industries and services across the area.

The Deanery Synod seeks to identify and then provide helpful training across the Parishes, giving opportunities for sharing good practice and upcoming events.

Regular attendance at the Chapter of Clergy is usually around six, though there are also several PTO Ministers who attend when they can. The Chapter endeavours to provide fellowship and support across the Deanery.



The Local Area



The Local Area

Additional Information Sources

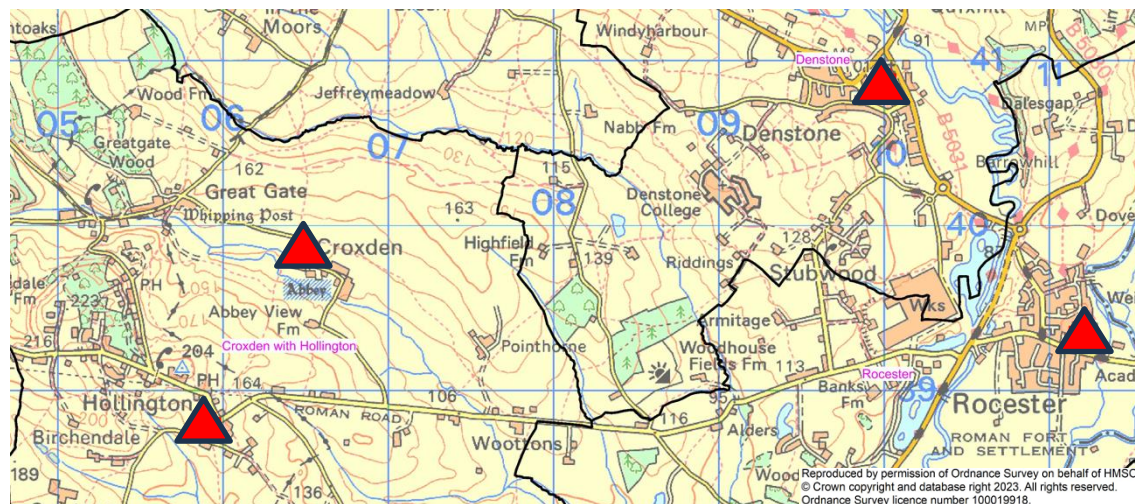
<https://rocesterparishcouncil.com/history-of-rocester/> - ROCESTER AREA

<http://denstonevillage.uk/> - DENSTONE AREA

<https://croxdenparishcouncil.co.uk/> - CROXDEN AREA

<https://www.checkleyparishcouncil.co.uk/> - HOLLINGTON AREA

The Benefice is principally rural, with two small urban settings nearby in Uttoxeter and Ashbourne.



There is good employment in engineering at the local World Headquarters of JCB which is centrally located in the Benefice, and there are other industrial settings located in the nearby towns.

Alton Towers is also a major employer, with the range of hotels and leisure facilities, less than three miles from Denstone and Rocester. In Denstone, there is an award-winning Farm Shop, and there are good bars and restaurants all around the local area.

Transport links are good with the A50 feeding to both the M1 and M6, and the cities of Stoke on Trent and Derby are within 20 miles of the Benefice.

Train services direct to Stoke on Trent, Crewe and Derby for national rail links are available from Uttoxeter.

East Midlands, Manchester and Birmingham Airports are all within 60 - 90 minutes travel time.

Role Description for Our Vicar

Evangelism	<p>A strong “Highly Visible” Leader.</p> <p>An advocate for recognition and encouragement of discipleship</p> <p>A developer of new ideas, being willing to try and fail as well as trying and succeeding.</p> <p>An effective communicator willing and able to collaborate with a diverse team of people.</p> <p>A keen supporter of our Dementia Friendly Churches and Eco Churches Status</p>
Vocation	<p>Recognition of your own calling</p> <p>Maintaining a vocational prayer life, leaving time for your own personal growth in God.</p> <p>Valuing the 3 P’s of “Pause, Presence and Prayer”.</p> <p>To grow in Christlikeness, whilst inviting others to join you on the journey.</p> <p>To recognize and utilise the benefits of engaging with and working alongside your Ministry Team, Readers, Churchwardens, Verger, and PCC members.</p> <p>Enabling Mission and Growth in Rural and Urban Churches</p> <p>Evidence of growing disciples by building on the confidence and gifts of God’s people.</p> <p>Evidence of encouraging and growing stewardship.</p> <p>Evidence of reaching out to the community</p>

Person Specification for Our Vicar

Qualifications and Training	Currently up to date with both National and Diocesan Agendas for example “Growing Younger.”
General Experience	<p>Evidence of effective working in an Anglican Parish Ministry and a commitment to Church growth.</p> <p>Evidence of leading worship and preaching in a variety of styles to engage with people of varying outlooks, ages, and understanding including school’s ministry.</p> <p>Evidence of identifying pastoral care needs and ensuring appropriate structures and skills to provide this to the community.</p> <p>Evidence of growing disciples and growing stewardship by building on the confidence and gifts of God’s people.</p>
Personal Attributes	<p>To be able to talk about and share your own secure, personal prayerful Christian Faith</p> <p>Energetic and enthusiastic, with a good sense of humour.</p> <p>Strong time management, planning and organisational skills, with good IT and audio-visual skills.</p> <p>Have empathy to be able to help, bring comfort and reassurance to those in need or at the end of their lives.</p> <p>Ensures that work with children both in schools and in church is in place and is effective. e.g. communion training/services.</p>
Aspirations	<p>To be enthusiastic about Social Justice, with a strong motivation to care and tend to the needs of the diverse congregation and of the community with loving service, including those with loneliness or dementia.</p> <p>To recognize the work done and yet to be done in our Eco-Friendly churches.</p> <p>To work with the available technology to enhance the delivery of services e.g., weddings, funerals, and regular worship.</p>

St Michael's Church - Rocester



St Michael's is a broad, welcoming church family in the heart of the community of Rocester, Staffordshire. We provide a nurturing home for those comfortable with most of the strands of the mainstream Anglican tradition.

We offer different services encompassing both traditional and more relaxed worship styles, aiming to welcome all age groups and particularly to welcome newcomers. We also recognise that we have more to do in line with our Mission Action Plan.

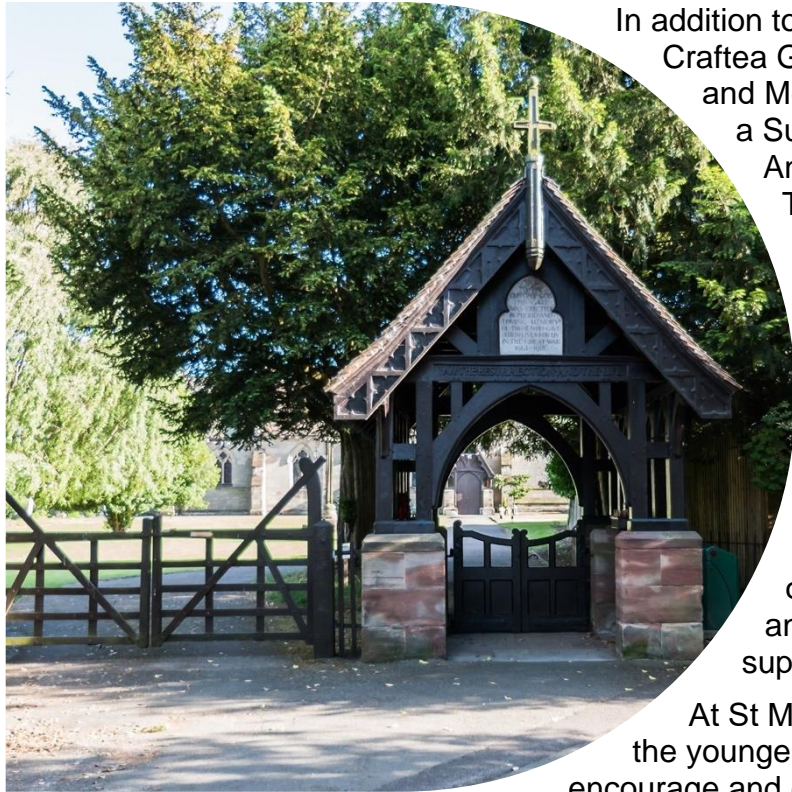
The church building at St Michael's is in good condition. The bell tower contains a peal of eight bells that are rung as regularly as possible, for Sunday services and other notable events, by our own team and visiting ringers. Inside the church the seating comprises of pews and cushioned chairs for 120, that can be moved and stacked to reconfigure the space for different activities, from café style worship to Harvest Supper's with past activities including Karaoke, 'A Christian Magic Show', Music and Choir concerts, Movie Nights, and of course, Bingo.

There is a small kitchen and toilet installed at the back of the church, and this is used for serving refreshments on Sundays and at other times.

The vestry provides additional preparation and storage space and houses the modern high-quality audio-visual equipment. The upstairs room contains the colour copier/printer and further storage. Whilst our church building is traditional it has a modern twist. The projector and screen allow for films and videos alongside service text to be projected in high-definition colour.



St Michael's Church - Rocester



In addition to worship we offer a Craftea Group, Mothers Union and Men's Shed, along with a Sunday Club, Little Angels (Carer and Toddler group) Rainbows and Guides.

We have two thriving home Bible study groups led by members of the congregation which seek to study the Word of God whilst offering a 'family feel' and an inclusive and supportive environment.



At St Michael's we recognise that there is potential for growth across all age groups, particularly the younger generation. We are exploring and would like to develop different styles of worship to encourage and grow our congregation.

. On a Sunday morning the 10.30am service is a Communion service, following the liturgy of Common Worship. This is followed by refreshments.

Once a month we have a Cafe Church, which starts with bacon sandwiches and refreshments at 10.00 am. Informal and lively worship for all ages begins at 10.30 am, focussing on a different theme each month. This is a growing and developing form of worship led by our Licensed Reader, which is proving popular. Our newly formed worship band, Revelation, has contributed to the music aspect of this informal worship

St Michael's Church Rocester

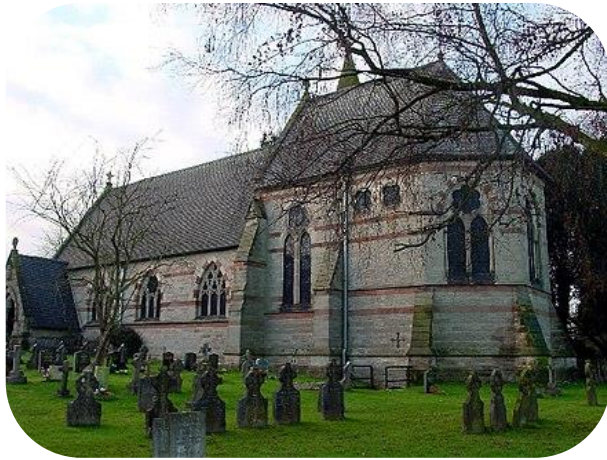
We have a robed choir which sings for the 10.30 am Sunday Eucharist, led by our organist. They help lead the hymns and sing during communion. We are developing a worship band to lead the music in our informal services.

We have talented volunteers and good resources to provide weekly activities for any young people who attend church. Until recently we have had an active youth group who met regularly and took part in drama and music presentations within worship.



This is an area of church life that we seek to develop. We aim to glorify God using our worship times to hear from Him and to prepare us for the mission He calls us to. We want to bring people closer to Christ through worship, deepening their relationship with Him.

All Saints Church - Denstone



All Saint's Church is in Denstone, a village and Civil Parish with 61 on its electoral roll. It is situated next to the River Churnet within sight of the Weaver Hills between the market towns of Uttoxeter and Ashbourne. It is surrounded by farmland and is situated close to the theme park of Alton Towers. Denstone Parish Church was built to specifically reflect in its services and architecture the Catholic revival in the Church of England. The liturgy today also reflects an Anglo-Catholic, ritualistic, and liturgical style of worship, but we do not extend to using incense, offering benediction and praying the rosary?

New ways of worship "have been recently introduced in our more evangelical Service of the Word and Taizé styled worship.

Denstone is proud of the architecture of both the Church, and the nearby Denstone College (an independent boarding and day school) which were built by Sir Percival Heywood in the mid-19th Century Victorian Gothic Revival Period.

There is a structured timetable of services across the Benefice, which is detailed in the table later in this document.

Preparation for Holy Communion has taken place in both All Saints Primary School and in Church services, and it was gratifying to see seven new communicants at our last service.

Our Rural Dean is continuing with this training whilst we are in vacancy.



All Saints Church - Denstone



We are an “Eco Church” and as a Benefice we are working towards “Silver Eco Church ” status. Our PCC consists of two Churchwardens, a Treasurer , Verger, and three other members. Two lay members of the Congregation help considerably with the fabric of the church building and with Quinquennial inspections.

Some members hold dual roles such as Secretary, Health and Safety Officer, and Safeguarding Officer. The Deanery Synod representative is currently in vacancy.

In our outreach into the village church school, All Saints Academy, we offer regular assemblies twice a term. We are in the process of developing an ‘Open the Book’ team, anticipating starting work in the school soon.



All Saints Church - Denstone



Denstone Mothers' Union has nineteen members that meet on the last Thursday of each Month at 2.00pm in homes of the various group members. The Mothers Union promotes Christian family life in action at home and abroad.

Our vision is for a world where God's love is shown through loving, respectful and flourishing relationships.

At the core of the MU is its dedication to prayer, prayers for the Church, mission, and evangelism.

Monthly prayers and hymns are shared along with guest speakers entertaining the group.

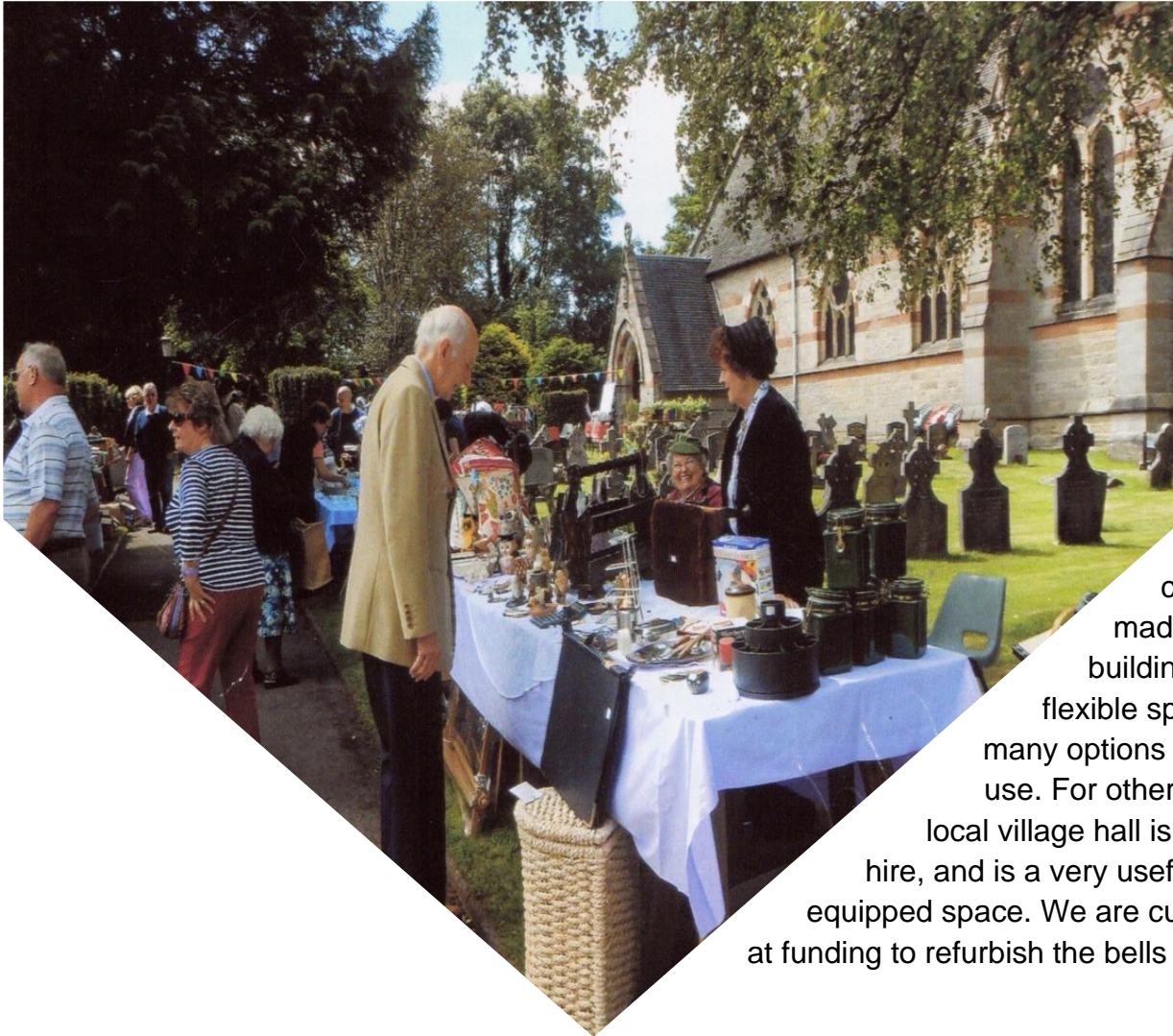
We also have a Women's Institute, a Tuesday Club, a Gardening Guild, an Arts and Crafts Group and a Men's Shed.

All these along with our meetings at the local farm shop for coffee and friends serve as an active community connection for the Church community.

We have a very effective fundraising calendar of events every year.

Our Website and Facebook Page provide community portals to keep up to date with events and activities as well as the "Denstone Matters" Website that covers all local communications.

All Saints Church - Denstone



The churchyard burial area is almost full, with only 15-20 places remaining, so we may need to consecrate the grassed area to the North side of the church in the future. The graveyard is kept in good order, with regular mowing during the summer season.

Although All Saints Church Denstone does not have a Church Hall,

many events held in the church itself.

The replacement of the pews with single

chairs has

made the church

building a very

flexible spaces with

many options for layout and

use. For other events the

local village hall is available for

hire, and is a very useful well-

equipped space. We are currently looking

at funding to refurbish the bells and belltower.



St Giles Church - Croxden



St Giles is a small Victorian church in a rural hamlet sited just a stone's throw from the picturesque ruins of a Cistercian Abbey. The church building which was completed in 1887 is in good structural order and the following facilities have been installed or improved after major fundraising efforts:

Wide access toilet facilities, hearing loop/sound system, kitchenette with sink and hot water in the small meeting room at the west end of the church, a car park with flood lights and additional electric heaters under the pews. The heating is the least satisfactory aspect of the building but estimates to change the energy source came in at far beyond the means of a small church. The churchyard has been extended and has sufficient spaces for the next few years. It is mowed in summer by a local firm, and this is paid for by fundraising.

The present church replaced a chapel which was previously believed to be the Visitor's Chapel for the Abbey. As the only public building in Croxden St Giles is used as a polling station and the Croxden Parish Council meet there bi-monthly.



St Giles Church - Croxden



We have taken some of the principles of the monastic life as inspiration for mission – namely being at the heart of the community and providing hospitality and friendship to all. The congregation is a loyal one comprised mostly of older local people (plus a couple of dogs from time to time!). A few members of the congregation come from out of the parish e.g. from Uttoxeter and Newcastle under Lyme. There are some young families in the parish.

There are four regular monthly services detailed in the table later in the profile which range from a BCP Evensong to a Family Service (sometimes themed to match the seasons such as Plough Sunday and Valentine's Day) Some are outdoor services, for instance the Rogation Sunday Service which is celebrated on a local farm and there is an annual Abbey Service in the ruins.

Previously there have been two services a month at 6.00 pm on Sundays – this is a popular time, and we would hope to revert to it in the future.

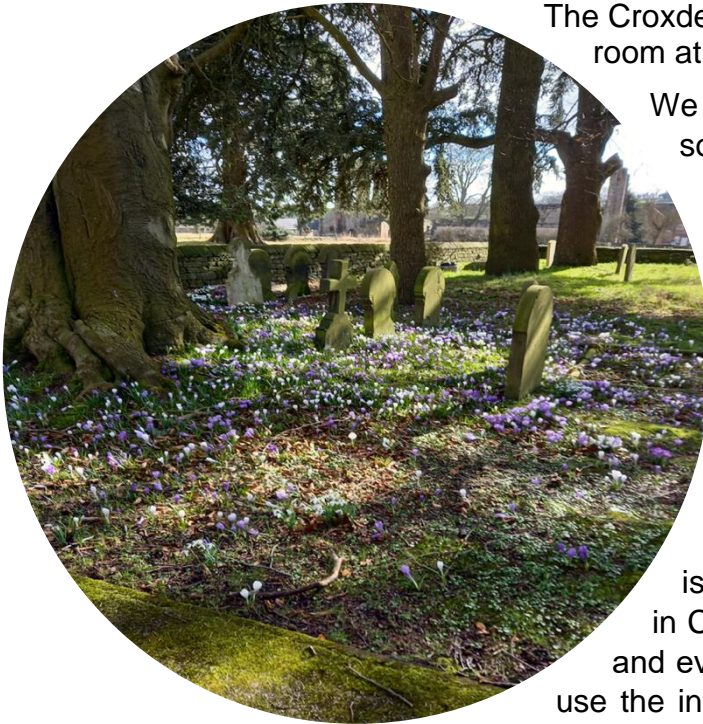
Christingle and Mothering Sunday services are shared with St John's Church - Hollington, and we take turns to host them.

Some of the church social events and special services do attract these young families and we would love to involve them in more regular church activities! The social life of the church also reaches into the wider community with events such as Open Gardens, Scarecrow trails and the annual Children's Easter Egg Hunt in the Abbey ruins. These are very well supported.

St Giles Church - Croxden

A “Forest Church” style of worship is being developed here due to the rural setting.

In summary although we are at present a mainly traditional church, we are also open to new ideas to forward us in our mission in bringing new people to faith with new and different worship patterns. The church is the only public building in Croxden and is at the heart of celebrating national events such as the Coronation and Remembrance Day. We work closely with the local Parish Council to mark these events as the War Memorial is in St Giles’ churchyard.



The Croxden Parish Council uses the small meeting room at the west end of the church.

We have an organist plus a choir and the sound system in the church enables a wider range of people to participate in services, by reading the gospel and leading intercessory prayers. We collect for the local food bank and take part in fund raising for a variety of causes from Ukraine and Macmillan Cancer Support to local Girl Guides as well as holding coffee mornings as ‘social spaces’ for people to meet up. We have a committed joint PCC together with St John’s Hollington. The PCC meets regularly, and each church also has their separate Church Council meetings. We have two Churchwardens and a Deputy Churchwarden at St Giles, and each church has a Treasurer. There is a PCC Secretary. Communication with the scattered population is very important to us. We still have a Benefice Parish Magazine and more than 70 are distributed in Croxden Parish and beyond. We have a website, but the main means of publicising our services and events and keeping in touch with local people is via email at present. For those people who don’t use the internet we regularly distribute flyers and use posters and banners to advertise our events and services. Other groups such as history and art groups have also used the building to meet on occasion. We would like to encourage more use of the building and we aspire to become a member of the Quiet Gardens Movement. This is currently an area which we are developing as a whole church.



St John's Church - Hollington



The attractive Church of St. John's is Grade 2 listed & situated in the centre of the village. It was designed by George Edmund Street and built in 1861 again using local Hollington Stone. Street was a well-respected architect of his day, his greatest work probably the Royal Courts of Justice in the Strand, London.

William Morris the Arts and Crafts designer was thought to have influenced the design & pattern of various important embroidered frontals and wall hangings that are held in the church.

Sunday services are the second and fourth Sunday of the month at 10.30am. Holy Communion on the second, and Morning Prayer on the fourth.

We work closely with the landlord at the Star Pub as he allows us to use his carpark for Weddings, Funerals and other events. We have Open Church" during the summer months, which is popular with walkers, cyclists & visitors to the area. We have volunteers who assist with the finances and communications, we are part of a joint Parish with Croxden.

A volunteer currently "caretakes" for the church and acts as a point of contact. Our Electoral Roll stands at 11, Our regular congregation varies between 3-5, but when we celebrate Christmas, Easter, Harvest, Mother's Day and other significant festivals, the village community turns out in good numbers to celebrate with us.



St John's Church - Hollington



Hollington is a mainly residential/commuter village in a rural picturesque hilltop setting between the towns of Uttoxeter and Cheadle.

The village has a long history of quarrying and stone dressing, and we have three working stone mason businesses in the village.

Nine new houses using Hollington Stone have just been built near the Village Hall, and, around 15% of the houses in the village have changed owners in the last two years, bringing different people into the village, notably not young families.

Hollington like Croxden does not have a village school or shop, but we do have two pubs, a coffee shack and a weekly bus service that goes to Uttoxeter.

St John's Church - Hollington



Our newly refurbished Village Hall which is run by local volunteers hosts a range of church and other social events, including the Harvest Supper, Bingo & Yoga classes.

It is also the meeting venue for a group of villagers known as "The Friendship Group" who get together once a month.

We have a group of villagers known as the Friends of St. John who fundraise to restore, preserve, maintain, insure and improve the church building and its monuments, fixtures and fittings for the benefit of the village, they also voluntarily maintain the Churchyard.

We are lucky to have a healthy savings account balance due to the support of the Friends of St. John. We usually have three main social events each year to help us financially.

- A joint Harvest Supper with Croxden.
- A Pancake Day at the Old School House which raises about £1500 each year.
- A very popular Village Fayre whose proceeds are split between the Friends, the Church & the Village Hall. This Fayre proceeds average about £6,000 each year.

St John's Church - Hollington

In the future, we would like to re-energise our church & we are open to working on new ideas with our new Vicar.

- Recruiting new church wardens to manage our church.
- Learning to use more modern technologies like Facebook to advertise events.
- Holding more events in the Church.
- Ensuring that the church building is kept in good order.
- Improving our usage of posters, adverts in the Parish magazine & banners to advertise events.
- Strengthening our Joint PCC with Croxden
- Continuing and extending the reach of the Parish magazine which is currently distributed to forty homes.



What we can offer you

- The spacious Vicarage is a comfortable place for you to make your home.
- The local area is a beautiful rural setting to live in, with great schools, shops, and leisure facilities.
- Four warm, welcoming, and active church congregations, who are open to new ideas, patterns, and styles of worship.
- A deep desire within the congregations to explore and grow in faith together.
- Numerous willing volunteers eager to support the churches' mission.
- A group of churches with buildings that are in a good state of repair backed up with sound finances.
- A Benefice wide vision for growth with a Joint Mission Action Plan in place.
- A group of local communities that are open to Evangelism.
- A strong desire in each church to develop an outstanding children and young people's ministry.



Annual Easter Egg Hunt
at Croxden Abbey



Rocester Café Church



Ready to Worship



A celebration at
Denstone



"Revelation"
Worship Band

Monthly Benefice Service Structure

Monthly Pattern	St Michael's Rocester	All Saints Denstone	St Giles' Croxden	St John's Hollington
First Sunday	10.30 am. Holy Communion	10.30 am. Service of the Word	3.00 pm. Holy Communion	-
Second Sunday	10.30 am. Holy Communion	09.00 am. Holy Communion	3.00 pm. Family Service	10.30 am. Morning Prayer
Third Sunday	10.00 am. Café Church	10.30 am. Holy Communion	3.00 pm. Family Evensong	
Fourth Sunday	10.30 am. Holy Communion	09.00 am. Morning Prayer	3.00 pm. Family Communion	10.30 am. Morning Prayer
Fifth Sunday	10.30 am. Benefice – Holy Communion (alternating venues)	10.30 am. Benefice – Holy Communion (alternating venues)	10.30 am. Benefice – Holy Communion (alternating venues)	10.30 am. Benefice – Holy Communion (alternating venues)
Weekdays	-	7.00 pm Bi-monthly Taizé Service	-	-

Benefice Service Statistics

Location and Service type	Young People (0 – 18 yrs.)	Adults	Total
Benefice (On Rotation) - Morning Communion	3	45	48
Rocester – Morning Communion	4	35	39
Rocester – Service of the Word	1	35	36
Rocester – Café Church	7	40	47
Denstone – Morning Communion	-	28	28
Denstone – Morning Prayer	-	23	23
Denstone – Evening Taizé	-	20	20
Croxden – Communion	-	15	15
Croxden – Family Service	-	15	15
Croxden – Evensong		15	15
Hollington – Morning Communion	-	5	5
Hollington – Morning Prayer	-	5	5
High days and holiday services in each church can double or even treble the congregation size.			

Prayer Ministry

“So, what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my understanding; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my understanding.” 1 Corinthians 14-15

Our prayer ministry is committed to building a deeper and more prayerful life in our church.

We have a small team in each church that lead the intercessions in the services. We would like to enable the wider congregation to pray together, to draw closer to each other and to God and to lean on God to develop a stronger relationship with Him.

The churches hold regular planning meetings which begin with prayer and our Bible study groups see prayer time as a valuable aspect of their meetings.

We are seeking to build a more prayerful life for our church and to support each other in prayer and we would love for there to be a wider number of people from all ages who seek prayer and who pray for one another.



Discipleship Ministry

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.” Acts 2:42-47

There are two Home Groups that meet regularly providing an opportunity for fellowship, Bible study and prayer, with around fourteen people who regularly attend. These groups meet in the evenings in the homes of Benefice members.

People in home groups appreciate the value they find from growing their faith in a small group setting, but there are many in our church family who are not yet part of a home group.

The annual themed Lent course led by a Reader attracts a group of around fourteen people from within the church.

We would like to encourage more to reflect on the opportunity for their faith to be nurtured and deepened within a small group. In recent years we have also struggled to find leaders confident enough to host and run these groups.

We hope that our next Vicar will help us to address these challenges, inspiring and equipping people to invest more time and energy in helping themselves and others to grow in their faith.

We aspire to have a more established route for new Christians to develop their faith in a supported environment at the four churches in the Benefice.



Fellowship in our Benefice.

Our vision is to combat loneliness and isolation not only for those who are part of our church but also our local community. Our social events are a great way of allowing us to demonstrate God's love and care for all, and for some people this can be a first step in wanting to know more about the Christian faith.

We have regular Coffee and Chat sessions and throughout the year have various events for the whole community, including Spring, Summer and Autumn fayres, Christmas Tree Festivals and events to mark special occasions for example, the King's Coronation.

In our wider ministry we reach out to the local community in several ways.

- We visit our local residential Care Home to provide Holy Communion, singing and fellowship.
- The Vicar is invited to be a regular visitor to share fellowship with the local schools and JCB Academy and we recognise that this is an area for development.



- The youth group has tidied Rocester village, picking up litter, and cleaning local signage.
- Church members provided meals for the isolated during the Covid lockdown periods, with support from JCB.
- There is a popular outdoor Rogation Service held on a farm in Croxden each year
- The Craftea have knitted poppies for the Royal British Legion and over the past ten years have raised £10,000.
- A popular church event is the annual 'Donkey Walk' at Christmas, with a donkey, or more recently a miniature Shetland pony when the donkey refuses to cooperate, leading a Nativity walk to the church on Christmas Eve.
- Further afield St. Michael's Church supports a school in Kenya through prayer and donations. A recent project has been to raise money to provide a prosthetic limb for Agnes, the wife of Samson, the Headteacher.

Fellowship in our Benefice.



There is an active Women's Institute, a Tuesday Club, a Gardening Guild and an Arts and Crafts Group in Denstone.

The annual Remembrance parade from Denstone Church to the War Memorial is always well attended and supported by the British Legion.

Little Angels Members of the church community lead a twice weekly afternoon session during term time for Carers, babies and toddlers.

Social events are planned throughout the year with visits from Santa Claus, Easter eggs, coffee mornings and an annual outing to the pantomime which is always oversubscribed.

Our Mother's Unions meet monthly and welcome all, providing fellowship, prayer and outreach. We have an active Memory Cafe as part of our work towards being a 'Dementia Friendly Church' where people enjoy a chat, and play games-pets are welcomed too! This is a growing and appreciated extension of our fellowship.

During the winter months, St Michael's Church has been a 'Warm Welcome' space for three days weekly. Funding has been received to pay for the church heating.

Bell Ringing is popular at both St Michael's and All Saints, Denstone, an activity which happens often with the bell ringing groups growing. The bells are also rung at special occasions, including weddings and funerals.



Fellowship in our Benefice.



Voyage Day-Care is a group of adults with learning difficulties who use the church every Monday, and monthly on a Friday, to chat to church volunteer members, take part in crafts and jigsaws, and enjoy refreshments.

Craftea is a group for people to come and knit, natter and be creative. This is a vibrant, well attended group by members from across the Benefice.

Some activities include knitting poppies for the British Legion Poppy Appeal, knitting blankets for hospitals for end-of-life care patients and renovating banners from a local chapel which now hang in the church. At Christmas a party was enjoyed in conjunction with Men's Shed.

Men's Shed is a weekly gathering, welcoming all members of the community to extend their creativity in wood and metal each Wednesday. This takes place at the 'Shed' which is located at the Rocester Village Hall.



In the last couple of years there has been a popular Benefice Walk which traces the way through the countryside between the four churches. Each church offers food and drink to sustain the pilgrims on their way.



Pastoral Support

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. NKJV. 1 John 4:7



Pastoral support is an expression of our Christian care and love for each other.

It is not something carried out in isolation by our Vicar, but they will retain the overview and responsibility for it. Our home groups provide an important role in pastoral care while members of the congregation have considerable expertise in social care and can therefore provide and seek helpful information or support. Members of the community may be supported by a group, or by an individual with a particular area of expertise.

We aim to continue to be a church where it is “OK not to be OK” and to be open about mental health.

The range of pastoral support across the Benefice includes a wide range of activities,

- Food Bank donations and distribution.
 - Collections for families in need.
 - Support for Carers.
 - Support for Day Care setting for adults with Learning Difficulties.
 - Support for individuals and carers living with Dementia.
 - Worship visits and singing at local residential Care Home.
-
- Transport to worship and church events for the socially isolated.
 - Support for individuals and families in need or crisis.
 - Holy Communion at private homes and residential care homes.
 - Warm Space and a Place of Welcome during the colder months.



Our Team

The current Benefice Ministry team comprises two licenced readers, who are supported by many talented volunteers and a part time paid Administrator. In addition, there are many choristers musicians and organists.

One Reader is located in St Michaels' Church, Rocester. This reader has a calling to alternative worship models, e.g. café church, Celtic themed worship and Outdoor services. This reader also publishes the daily "Thought for the Day" on the Rocester Church Facebook page.

One Reader is located in All Saints Denstone Parish. This reader has a specific calling to Funeral Ministry. There is a regular call for Last Rites and bedside prayer for the dying in this elderly population, which this Reader takes an active part in. Both Readers currently preside at one service per month in Croxden or Hollington Churches.

The other ministry areas of the Benefice are led by our experienced volunteers, including safeguarding, bible study homegroups and various groups supporting the local community.

The PCC membership includes those who have been members for several years. During the vacancy various retired members of clergy, and our Readers are covering all the services together with the life events (baptisms, weddings & funerals).

We actively support and encourage continuing professional and spiritual development across the whole Benefice team by encouraging attendance at training and development events in the Diocese.

Our Mission Action Plan is Benefice wide, and we have established joint working parties facilitated by Simon Foster. Discussions have been fruitful and most importantly it demonstrates the willingness to work collaboratively across the four churches, and provides a starting point for the new Vicar to work with the teams.

We have sent working parties to other settings to look at different approaches to growing churches. We have a working group who are looking at the social media and online presence of the churches and the Benefice.



Our Finances

The parish share in each church is fully met.

Clergy expenses are paid in full directly by cheque by one treasurer and then allocated to the individual church accounts centrally.

	St Michael's Rocester	All Saints Denstone	St Giles' Croxden	St John's Hollington
Reserves (Some restricted funds)	35312	25000	5000	21000
Collections and Gift Aid	13085	13000	6929	1447
Other Direct Income (Variable)	23331	7000	7765	3310
Parish Share (All fully met)	13624	18500	8446	5927
Regular Missionary Giving to Others	1520	1500	500	500
Other Major Commitments	0	0	5216	1650

A Place to Call Home

The Vicarage built in the 1960's is a large spacious 4-bedroomed family home located on the quiet Church Lane, and is adjacent to St Michael's Church, Rocester, which can be seen from the garden.



The Vicarage has a large secure walled garden with extensive lawns, which are regularly mown by a volunteer from the church. The garden also has planted shrub borders, a useful garden store and a very productive apple tree.



There is also a brick built integral garage and ample parking for 2/3 cars on the gated drive.

Nearby, a short walk away in the village, there are good amenities including a general store, a post office, a florist and gift shop, a café, a fish and chip shop and an Indian restaurant. The local pub also serves good food.

There is a full-service garage and a very useful fuel station in the village.

A Place to Call Home



On the ground floor there is an entrance hall, the Vicar's office, a downstairs toilet, a separate dining room, a large living room, and a good-sized fitted kitchen.

Upstairs there are four spacious bedrooms, one complete with ensuite. There is also a separate guest toilet and bathroom.

The Benefice and the Diocese have funds set aside for decoration and development work for the Vicarage, which will be spent after discussions with the new incumbent, to make the Vicarage personally suited to them and their family.

A Place to Call Home

The Vicarage is located conveniently within easy walking distance of the church, the Dove First School, Ryecroft Middle School and the popular JCB Academy which offers an excellent choice for secondary education with a strong vocational stream.

The JCB Academy is supported by the JCB World Headquarters which is also located in the village.



There is a local Nursery, Cedar Tree which provides the next stage of education to follow on from the excellent start provided in St Michael's Church by "The Little Angels" carers and toddlers group.

Thomas Alleyne's in nearby Uttoxeter is also a popular choice of High School.

There are also two local fee-paying independent schools nearby, Abbotsholme and Denstone College, both of which provide 3-18 education.



Safeguarding



The Church of England will:

- Promote a safer environment and culture.
- Safely recruit and support all those with any responsibility related to children and vulnerable adults within the Church.
- Respond promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation.
- Care pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons.
- Care pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons.
- Respond to those that may pose a present risk to others

Safeguarding is an integral part of the life and ministry of the Benefice.

We are committed to maintaining environments that are safe for all children, young people and all adults and to create nurturing, caring conditions within our Benefice.

The Benefice has a very experienced safeguarding team which comprises Parish Safeguarding Officers (PSO) and volunteers. Written policies and procedures are reviewed annually and are posted prominently in the churches. Safeguarding is included as an agenda item at every PCC meeting and risk assessments are made for all activities where safeguarding concerns are a risk factor.

In conjunction with the Safeguarding team at Lichfield Diocese the PSO's contact existing volunteers and staff when their DBS or training is due for renewal. Training registers are maintained at each church and centrally at the diocese.

Our focus is on making sure volunteers are up to date with relevant training, that they have current DBS clearance where this is appropriate to their role, ensuring that children, young people and vulnerable adults are kept safe whilst in our care.



Disclosure &
Barring Service

Cedar Tree Private Nursery



Cedar Tree Nursery is set right in the heart of the village in the well-equipped children's centre, adjacent to the Village Hall.

At Cedar Tree Nursery Rocester, there are funded spaces available for 2-, 3- and 4-year-olds. Children can use their 'working parents', Think2, universal 15 and extended 30 hours funding codes at the Cedar Tree Nursery.



Government funding covers children right up until they are ready to start reception class at School (aged 4/5).

The Cedar Tree Nursery is also able to split funding with the local primary schools, meaning your child can attend some sessions there, whilst still attending the Cedar Tree Nursery in Rocester.



All Saints (CE) School Denstone



As a church school we aim to develop and uphold our Christian distinctiveness and weave it into all aspects of school life. We work in close partnership with All Saints church and have a local Vicar and members of the church community as Foundation governors on our Local Academy Council.

Our School is founded upon the core values of love, respect and kindness. These values were chosen by the children and time is spent exploring what is distinctively Christian about these values. We believe that our school is a place where all are valued as individuals and as God's children.

All Saints CE Academy, Denstone has close links to our local church and the children regularly make visits. These happen throughout the year and particularly at Christmas, Easter and Harvest Festival. The clergy are regular visitors, and the children receive a great deal of support from them.

The local church helps support our school in many ways from support in teaching Religious Education and running our Worship Team events, Collective Worship and Pupil Led Worship throughout the year.

All Saints CE Academy, works in partnership with the Lichfield Diocesan Board of Education to continue to grow, evolve and improve as an academy. We believe that both the school and the church are firm foundations for a rural community and working together will help keep the friendly, strong community spirit thriving throughout our beautiful village.

Dove (CE) First School, Rocester



Dove CE Academy – a Church of England school in the heart of our community and part of Staffordshire University Academies Trust. We pride ourselves on loving and supporting our entire community and work closely with St Michael's Church which is a short walk away.

At Dove CE Academy, we offer a broad and balanced curriculum that develops the whole child and challenges them to achieve their full potential. We have a dedicated team of professionals committed to providing high quality education to ensure that all children believe and achieve.

Personal development, mental health and wellbeing is a high priority in school. The teachers and support staff work in partnership with parents to ensure that all children feel safe, secure and are cared for. Our parents are encouraged to be actively involved in school life, through Celebration Assemblies, performances and sports events.

The parent association: FOD – Friends of Dove are very supportive.

Our pupils live their daily lives through our core Christian values of kindness, perseverance, respect, honesty, self-control and forgiveness: providing firm foundations rooted in the Christian faith. Our school motto "Roots to Grow and Wings to Fly" emphasises our focus to ensuring all children succeed and flourish whilst in our care.

Ryecroft (CE) Middle School, Rocester



Ryecroft C.E. Middle School is an exciting and special place in which to learn, and I am delighted to welcome you to our school website.

We are a Church of England Middle School with outstanding facilities, specialist teachers and delightful pupils. We quickly learn about each other as individuals so that we can nurture, support and encourage one another, developing confidence and resilience in all.

Our school values of Trust, Humility, Inspiration, Perseverance, Care and Community underpin our school ethos and help us to focus on everything we do.

We are passionate and unwavering in our commitment to deliver high quality teaching and learning opportunities, so that every child will reach their potential and experience life in all its fullness.

We are 'Loving and Learning Together' every day here.

At Ryecroft our pupils are visible, valued and respected; our children know they are listened to and that their opinions matter.

Our school is one of nine which belong to the Uttoxeter Learning Trust. We are proud to be part of this Multi Academy trust whose purpose is to INSPIRE the children we teach and provide an education which supports our pupils to become well rounded and successful citizens.

Abbotsholme School, Rocester 3-18 (Ind)



Abbotsholme has a range of superb facilities, allowing all pupils from Nursery through to Sixth Form to have the opportunity to participate and excel in an extensive programme of sports, outdoor education, agriculture and equine activities as well as the creative arts, music and drama.

With its own fully working farm, equine centre, incredible outdoor education facilities and its own theatre there really is something for everyone.

Abbotsholme caters for a broad ability range. Academic standards are high with the majority of sixth formers going on to their first-choice university.

Breadth and balance shape the curriculum, which aims to develop critical and creative thinking and self-discipline across a wide range of subjects at GCSE and A Level.

The boarding experience at Abbotsholme is a happy one, where staff and pupils know each other well and where every individual shares equal responsibility for the community's well-being and progress. Small, friendly homes are run by resident house-parents as family units. Younger boarders share bright and comfortable dormitories in threes and fours whilst older pupils have single or shared study-bedrooms.

Denstone College, Denstone 3 -18 (Ind)



Denstone College is an independent day and boarding school of more than 775 pupils aged 4-18.

It has been educating boys since 1873 and girls since 1976, and offers a truly all-round educational experience.

The high standard of pastoral and academic provision is remarkable, and this has been confirmed by the latest ISI inspection. A Level and GCSE results are usually in line with those of the very best all-round schools nationally.

In 2021, Denstone College opened 'The Prep at Denstone' on site – a fast-growing and academically exciting offering for our youngest learners.

Continual investment in facilities – particularly academic, boarding and sporting – continue apace.

With a dedicated, talented and inspiring staff, fantastic facilities and as impressive a rural setting as you could find, we balance the pursuit of academic excellence with a broad co-curricular programme.

Denstone College offers students more than 40 sports and activities.

JCB Academy



The JCB Academy was the first of a brand-new kind of school in the UK when it opened in 2010.

The JCB Academy is a school specialising in business and engineering.

It teaches students from Y9 to Sixth Form and provides Intermediate (L2) and Advanced (L3) apprenticeship programmes as well as Business and Engineering T-Levels which provide additional choices post-GCSE in a whole new way and it educates the inventors, engineers, health scientists, and business and finance leaders of tomorrow, with a motto of 'Changing lives by developing the engineers and business leaders of the future.'

The JCB approach pairs classroom learning with practical application, and we have an impressive range of world-class industry partners who help with that. JCB, of course, but also including Bosch Rexroth, Harper Adams University, Rolls-Royce and Toyota Motor Manufacturing. Names that can turn heads with learners and lock in their learning engagement.

It has purpose-built, state-of-the-art facilities, and a unique curriculum, with a progressive, 21st Century approach to education.

Traditional values are at the heart of The JCB Academy, and it places a huge emphasis on self-discipline, good behaviour, uniform, teamwork, and co-operation.

Is this the position for you?

Thank you for reading this far...we hope you feel that we have provided enough detail to allow you to consider our Benefice as your next step...

If you would like an informal conversation, please contact the Bishop of Stafford's office (gemma.trueman@lichfield.anglican.org)

Please use the following links to find out more about our Benefice and the local area www.rdch.org.uk

<https://rochesterparishcouncil.com/history-of-rochester/> - ROCESTER AREA

<http://denstonevillage.uk/> - DENSTONE AREA

<https://croxdenparishcouncil.co.uk/> - CROXDEN AREA

<https://www.checkleyparishcouncil.co.uk/> - HOLLINGTON AREA

