

THE PARISHES OF ALL SAINTS' STECHFORD & ST EDBURGH, YARDLEY

The parishes are in the Yardley and Solihull deanery in the Archdeaconry of Aston in the Diocese of Birmingham



“TWO SEPARATE CHURCHES, UNITED IN OUTLOOK”
quote by Bill Turner Lay Reader, All Saints’ Stechford

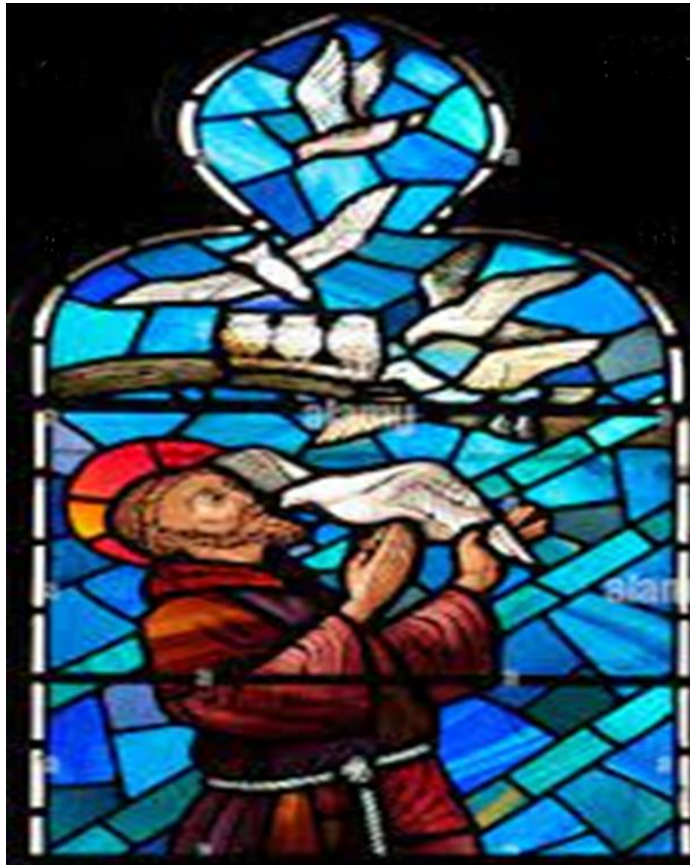
Attached are details of both parishes.



THE PARISH CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS' STECHFORD

PARISH PROFILE JUNE 2023

Approved by the PCC of All Saints' Stechford



PARISH PRAYER

God, our Father, we thank you for your love that draws us together. We thank you that through Jesus you accept us just as we are.

Grant us Grace, Father, to grow together in wisdom, patience and understanding, with a willingness to share each other's burdens, and the courage to share our faith with others.

Grant us a realistic vision for the future, and the ability to see it through, that many who do not yet know you may be drawn into the fellowship of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

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SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

The Parish Church of All Saints' Stechford has been serving God through worshipful prayer since the 3rd November 1898, but the Church itself, as a body of Christian people, has been active since 1877.

Stechford in the East of Birmingham, approximately five miles outside of the city centre.

All Saints' Church is situated in the heart of the newly formed Deanery of Yardley and Solihull which came into being at the beginning of 2021, we have been in vacancy for 19 months.

Part of the Aston Archdeaconry, Yardley and Solihull deanery contains 23 parishes and comprises 25 churches. As a result of the People and Places Framework, All Saints' forms part of an Oversight area, a group of churches connecting through cooperation and collaboration to develop a shared vision of ministry.

Our Sunday worship starts at 1030hrs and is traditional and liturgically based. Attendance at the Sunday Service varies between 20 – 30 people with an average age range from 3 years old to 90 plus.

The Pastoral Care Team visits parishioners in their homes and hospitals to share fellowship and the Lay Reader administers communion to the sick and housebound. We continue to show our love of God through acts of friendship during the week, culminating in hospitality on Fridays with our Fellowship Coffee Morning.



Photographs of All Saints' Church laid out for Worship

SECTION 2: DESCRIPTION OF THE PARISH

Who are we?

All Saints' Stechford is a small and friendly church with an electoral roll of 28 and an average Sunday Service attendance of 25.

On the 3rd Sunday of the month, we hold a less formal "Family Service" with an aim to encourage the attendance and involvement of the younger member of the congregation. During the service, we sing more modern hymns and use a more accessible version of the Gospel.

Serving the young people within our congregation and the wider community is important to us. A number of the younger members of the congregation didn't return to church following Covid, so we reluctantly had to suspend Junior Church. More recently, several new families have joined the church and we regularly have children and young people in our congregation making the reinstating of our Junior Church a key priority.' One of these young people was recently confirmed at the cathedral and three others are preparing for confirmation towards the end of this year.

All Saints' was instrumental in establishing a Messy Church in conjunction with Glebe Farm Baptist Church and held at the Shilonite Gospel Church of Cherubim and Seraphim in Glebe Farm. This is something that we wish to get more involved in, especially as a number of attendees at the Messy Church attend events and services at All Saints'.

The choir at All Saints' has always formed an important part of our worship. Choral Evensong with St Edburgha's choir being an important and well attended event in our joint calendars. However, over the past few years, with the departure of the organist, the choir has dwindled. We have recently found that a new member of the congregation can and is willing to play the organ. We hope to reinstate the musical tradition that has fallen by the wayside.

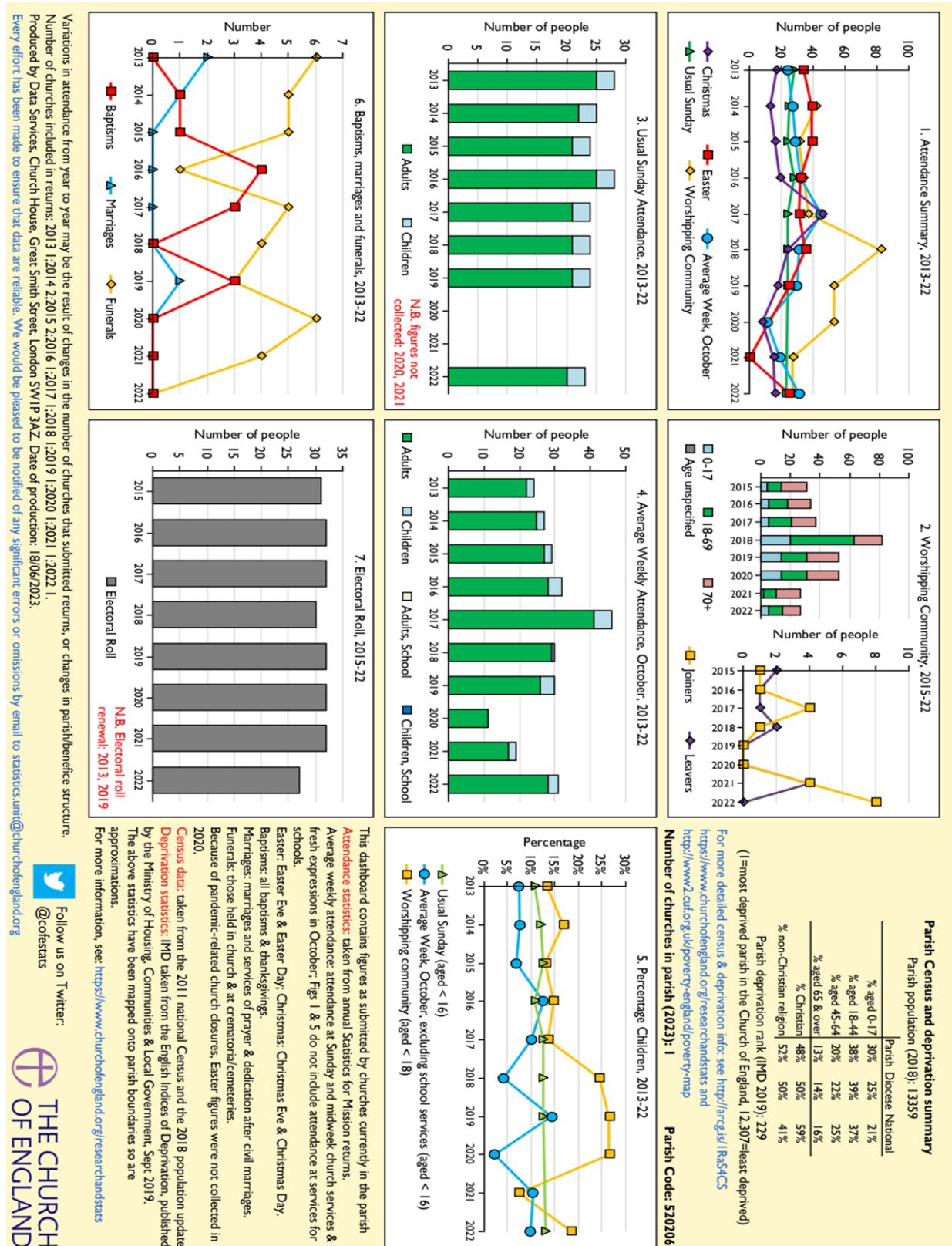


Confirmation Service

Worship outside of the Sunday Eucharist takes the form of a Wednesday Zoom Service led by our Lay Reader. This started during Covid19 and has been so successful that it forms part of our “normal” routine. The Pastoral Care Team will make weekly visits to the sick and housebound either in their own homes, hospitals or in residential care homes. St Martha’s Nursing Home, Colebourne Court Retirement Housing and Old Brookside Residential Home are all within walking distance of the church and are places that cooperate with us in the facilitation of periodic services of worship. This is something that is well attended and we would like to expand to the other Residential Homes in the parish. During the year, we will hold Bible Study Groups, Lent Courses and Open Days for Prayer and Reflection. 3D and the Alpha Courses are held as a joint group with St Edburgha and we actively seek out other opportunities to work and pray together.

The congregation is made up of people from a wide range of countries, church traditions, cultures and nationalities as shown on the Parish Dashboard.

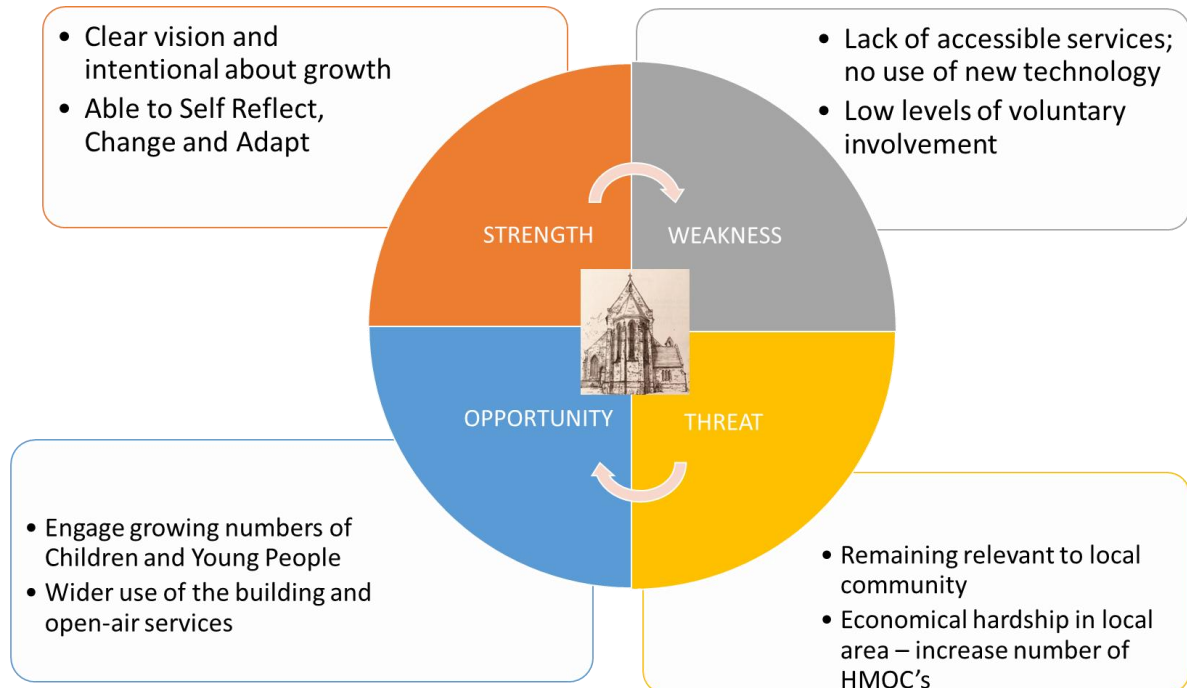
PARISH DASHBOARD - 2022



Variations in attendance from year to year may be the result of changes in the number of churches that submitted returns, or changes in parish/benefice structure. Number of churches included in returns: 2013 1; 2014 2; 2015 2; 2016 1; 2017 1; 2018 1; 2019 1; 2020 1; 2021 1; 2022 1.
Produced by Data Services, Church House, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3AZ. Date of production: 18/06/2023.
Every effort has been made to ensure that data are reliable. We would be pleased to be notified of any significant errors or omissions by email to statistics.unite@churchofengland.org

SWOT Analysis

Using the information gathered in the TCAP Session, we have compiled the below SWOT Analysis detailing the main points as discussed:-



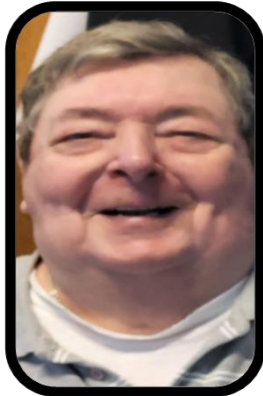
Our Vision for the Future

We believe that over the next 3 – 5 years, God is calling us to be:-

- ✓ A place of friendship and welcome to all who seek to know the love of God through salvation in Jesus Christ.
- ✓ To inspire and help church members to take steps towards a deeper knowledge of God.
- ✓ A strong, positive and forward-thinking church working on Outreach programmes and in partnership with other churches to become more active in Community life.
- ✓ To develop new and existing Pastoral Care arrangements for our wider church family.
- ✓ To explore and develop new and existing opportunities for community engagement, particularly with those groups not currently prominent in our church family.
- ✓ Develop a Youth Programme and encourage family participation in the general life of the church.

SECTION 3: OUR CHURCH & OUR COMMUNITY

Leadership – Meet the Team



Bill Turner
Lay Reader



Val Stevens
Church Warden



Myra Turner
Sub Warden



Georgina Reeves
Sub Warden



Val Britton
PCC Secretary



Val Hunt
Stewardship
Secretary



Cheran Stevens
Treasurer

Relationship with Other Churches

All Saints' Church has three churches within close vicinity, these are Stechford Baptist Church on Victoria Road and Corpus Christi Catholic Church on Albert Road. During November, all three churches jointly host the annual Remembrance Day service at the Five Ways War Memorial. The local Member of Parliament, Stechford Primary School, Stechford Neighbourhood Police and the local Bikers Chapter (The Outlaws) are also instrumental in organising the event. This service is well attended by local Scouts, Girl Guides, and retired military service personnel.

On Armistice Day, All Saints' holds a service of remembrance at Stechford Primary School. Children from Corpus Christi join the service and lay wreaths at the War Memorial.

All Saints' Church is an active member of Stechford & Yardley Churches Together. We regularly attend each other's services of worship, hold joint worship services and attend each other's social events.

Eight local churches join together to organise World Day of Prayer. All Saints Church and St Edburgha, St Michael and All Angels Church, Waterloo Road Chapel, Digbeth in the Field United Reformed Church, Yardley Methodist Church, Yardley Baptist Church, St Cyprians Church and Corpus Christi Catholic Church. This is hosted on rotation and is always well attended with members of each congregation reading or narrating.

On the 5th Sunday of the month, All Saints and St Edburgha used to hold a joint service on rotation. This service was suspended due to Covid19 and replaced with a weekly joint online service. Unfortunately, both of our ministers then retired and we have not resumed the service.



Five Ways War Memorial



Platinum Jubilee Celebrations

Involvement with Other Groups

St George's Syrian Church have an established relationship with All Saints' Church since 2012. Unable to secure their own building for worship, they have been booking the church and Community Hall twice per month on a Saturday and for High Services throughout the year. The Syrian Church use a curtain as an iconostasis, separating the nave from the sanctuary.



St George's Syrian Church's Iconostasis in situ during their service.

Bethesda Romanian Church is a community of Romanian believers unified through faith in Christ. They are committed to the teachings of Christ and obeying all of His commands, and it seeks to bring the Gospel to the world. Bethesda works together in love and unity, intent on the ultimate purpose of glorifying Christ. They have used All Saints' Church for worship, weddings and social events since 2022. They book every Sunday and once per month on Saturdays.

Head Start Nursery use the Community Hall twice per week for physical education. It is our intention to work closer with the staff, children and their parents to involve them in worshipful services and social events held in church.

The Community Payback Team are a group of individuals that have been given a community sentence as a result of being convicted of a crime by a court, but not being sent to prison. Under supervision, they perform unpaid work such as maintaining the church grounds, litter picking, general DIY and assisting with the Foodbank Allotments. They have been visiting All Saints' once per week since 2022.

SECTION 4 – CHURCH BUILDINGS & FACILITIES

St Andrew Community Centre

All Saints' is based at the far end of the parish, so in 1938, a daughter church named St Andrew's was formed in Glebe Farm. Due to falling attendance numbers, the congregations were merged.

On 09th May 2019, to the Glory of God, the Community Centre at All Saints Church was named St Andrews in memory of our daughter church and was opened by the Rt Reverend Anne Hollinghurst, Bishop of Aston.

St Andrew's Community Hall is regularly used by the local community as a venue to host birthday parties, games nights, Wedding Receptions and dance group training.



Family Social Event



Quiz Night



Christmas Cuppa with a Copper

The Vicarage

The Vicarage is currently rented out on a 3 month rolling contract and as it is proposed that the Vicar will reside in the vicarage at St Edgburgha's, the All Saints' vicarage will remain on rental for the foreseeable future.

The Vicarage is a modern, five-bedroom detached house in the grounds of the church. A converted garage acts as a separate office. The house is in good condition internally and externally and has well established gardens around the perimeter. Sitting in the church grounds, lockable gates provide for additional privacy and security.

There are lots of green open spaces within walking distance of the Vicarage with parks and Stechford Leisure Centre in easy reach.

The Vicarage is less than a 5-minute walk to Head Start Day Nursery and a 10-minute walk away from 2 local Primary Schools, Corpus Christi Catholic School and Stechford Primary School. The closest secondary school is Washwood Heath Academy.

The Vicarage is located near bus routes and is a 10-minute walk from Stechford Train station with regular connections into Birmingham Town Centre (7-minute journey). Local shops and a Retail Park can both be walked to in under 20 minutes.

Heartlands Hospital and the Richmond Health Centre are both within walking distances.



Aerial view of Vicarage



Front of Vicarage



Working with Stechford Baptist Church, St Edburgha's and Corpus Christi Catholic Church, All Saints hosts the Foodbank in St Andrews Community Centre every Friday.

The Foodbank portacabin is based at the rear of our church and stores food donations from local shops and supermarkets, the four churches congregations and the Trussell Trust donations. On Wednesday's, the volunteers pack and sort the food parcels in St Andrews Community Centre, ready for Friday's distribution day. A member from one of the four congregations will try to be available to provide any pastoral care that may be required.

Allotment Plots

A section of the church grounds has been converted into allotment plots and allocated for the growth and donation of fresh fruit and vegetables to the Foodbank.

Members of the congregation and the local community plant a variety of produce to supplement the food parcels.

SECTION 5: THE NEW INCUMBENT

We are praying for our new Priest in Charge to be able to work with our congregation and the people in the parish to plant, nurture, grow and strengthen our work and worship in love and faith to the glory of God.

Our style of worship and tradition of Eucharistic worship is important to us and we would welcome a more catholic expressions of worship – the participation of servers and occasional use of incense – as part of the mix.

Our new Priest must have the following characteristics: -

be a good communicator, empathetic, open, approachable, be a good listener, down to earth with a good sense of humour and have a creative streak!

The successful candidate will have:-

- Effective Pastoral skills
- Passion in preaching and teaching the word of God
- An ability to inspire us with exciting new approaches to worshipfulness
- Good leadership skills and be a skilled enabler.
- A style of worship that is attractive to a wide range of age groups
- Sympathy and an encouraging attitude towards all church family members and be respectful of their varying traditions
- An ability to identify and develop potential growth in congregational activity
- An ability to motivate lay people to pray and receive prayer
- A willingness to work with our ministry team to extend our current ministry, specifically targeting young people and those not yet in the church but keen to explore the Christian Faith
- Qualities of a strong team player with a collaborative approach to undertaking tasks



ST EDBURGH'S CHURCH, YARDLEY, BIRMINGHAM



1. The Parish

St Edburgha's is a diverse "outer ring" Parish of about 18,000 people consisting of a core of private housing surrounded by council estates. The population is ethnically diverse - approximately two thirds identify as White and approximately one third as Asian, Black or Mixed ethnicity. While over half the population identify as Christian (54%), a significant number identify as Muslim (19.6%). Percentages identifying as Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish or



Sikh are in single figures.¹ The majority of the population is employed but there are areas of the Parish which are considered to be areas of deprivation and poverty where there are a number of unemployed. A significant proportion of the population are over retirement age and there are a number of single parent families. There is limited local industry and commerce within the Parish, but one of Europe's largest hospitals is just outside the Parish boundary and Birmingham's International Airport, the National Exhibition Centre and a large motor car manufacturing plant are all nearby and employ a number of parishioners.

There are 2 primary schools in the Parish and a number of secondary schools in the neighbouring Parishes - one in particular just outside the boundary with which we had close links. There are 2 pubs and a shopping centre with local shops serving particular neighbourhoods. There are 5 small developments for retired people and a number of private nursing homes within the Parish. There is also a house within the Parish which belongs to the St Basil's Centre (who cater for homeless young people). A divisional police station is on the Parish boundary. The area is well served by public transport - particularly to and from the City centre - and it is close to a major out-of-city trunk road (A45). The nearest major Railway stations are either in the City or at the N.E.C, with three local stations in neighbouring Parishes.

The Parish is basically rectangular with St Edburgha's towards the east. The city's Outer Ring Road (A4040) runs across the middle of the Parish. A map is enclosed with key features marked.

2. The Congregation and P.C.C.

The average Sunday attendance is approximately 40 with the Electoral Roll currently at 55. The congregation is becoming more diverse, reflecting the changing demography of the area. This diversity is reflected amongst those taking an active role within the church. There are two young families attending services regularly. The congregation is mixed, ranging from unemployed to professionals as well as an increasing number of retired members.

¹ <https://www.churchofengland.org/about/data-services/resources-publications-and-data#na>

There is a P.C.C. of 8 elected members, serving 3-year terms, plus 1 Deanery Synod Representative, 2 churchwardens, and a Reader. The composition reflects the congregation i.e. few young(er) members. The committee structure is as follows:- Standing, Finance, Halls and Buildings, XPM (Extra Parochial Matters), Worship, Fundraising and Safe Guarding. These committees are made up of P.C.C. and co-opted members.

Each year our XPM committee selects a number of charities they wish to support - local, national and international. An envelope scheme is used for this purpose. In addition we support CMS (Nationally) & Malawi (through our Diocesan Link).

There are a number of community and church related groups which meet regularly in the Trust School and Church Halls. The church buildings are available for hire during the week and at weekends. The Church Hall is also used as a Polling Station. There are no other churches in the parish. However, connections with neighbouring parishes and other denominations in the area, are good, including shared services twice a year and events such as Christmas Carol singing and Easter Witness (both in the local shopping centre) and we have members who are committed to Stechford and Yardley Churches Together. We are members of Stechford Foodbank.



We have joined the Eco Church programme and are in the process of completing the Bronze Award. We also have a churchyard project aimed at increasing biodiversity within the church grounds.

We are registered as a Fairtrade Church.

3. Church and Parish Staff.

We are served by a dedicated Ministry team which includes 1 Reader and a retired Priest, who is fully involved in the Ministry of the Church. We have a Commissioned Pastoral Team of two members, who were re-commissioned in 2019. One member focuses on young children and co-ordinates a weekly Stay & Play group, as well as leading many school visits throughout the year. The other member co-ordinates a weekly Place of Welcome and carries out pastoral visits.

We have a team of 2 servers and a number of lesson readers, sidespeople and intercessors who are organised on a quarterly rota. In addition there is 1 Deputy Wardens who assists the Churchwardens.

We have a well maintained organ which is played by our Director of Music and used for all of our main services with the services being led by traditional robed Choir of 4 men, 4 women, and also a small but enthusiastic Singing Group.

We are fortunate to have the services of a paid part-time administrator, a member of the congregation, who acts as baptism and funerals co-ordinator. We also have a wedding co-ordinator.

4. Worship, Services & Policies.

Music for the main services tends to be traditional with hymns from “Common Praise” with occasional use of New Hymns and Worship Songs and other worship songs.

The regular Sunday services pre-COVID were:

8.30 Said Communion

10.30 Weeks 1, 3, 4 and 5 sung Communion service

Week 2 Non Eucharistic service including special occasions e.g. Mothering Sunday, Harvest, Remembrance, Christingle and Pet Service

6.30 BCP on 2nd Sundays, Taizé on 5th Sundays



Since COVID:

10.30am Sung Family Communion

6.30pm Compline - 4th Sunday.

6.30pm Taizé Service - 5th Sunday (4 times a year)

Our other services were suspended due to COVID and the ill health of the previous incumbent.

Sunday morning services are streamed by ZOOM.

From time to time the evening services are replaced by or take the theme of special services e.g. Bereavement service, Choral Evensong, Carols by Candlelight.



Attendance at regular services follows the national trend of worshippers no longer attending every Sunday. Approximately 40 attend the 10.30 Eucharist.

Morning Prayer is held at 9.30 am on Zoom on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and in person in church on Wednesday.

There are excellent attendances at special services such as the Easter Eucharist & the Candlelight Midnight Eucharist, Carols by Candlelight, and Remembrance Day.

There are a number of “occasional office services” which we believe indicates how highly the local community value “rites of passage” and how significant the church is to the people in the Parish and we also believe that this offers real opportunities for ministry.

We operate an open Baptism policy. Baptism services are held twice monthly for most months of the year. Anyone wishing to explore confirmation is welcome and expected to worship regularly. We present candidates for confirmation most years.

Our marriage policy follows the current guidelines, and includes the possibility of re-marriage for divorcees where appropriate. Services where couples can renew their vows are proving popular.

Yardley Crematorium is just outside the Parish and operates a rota system. Most funeral services are held there, but as Yardley is now closed for burials, families can request the committal to be at one of the other cemeteries around the city. A number of families request that their loved one's ashes are interred in the grounds of our Churchyard.

5. Discipleship

We have a regular bible discussion group every two weeks. This is a source of fellowship, support and spiritual growth, valued by those recently confirmed and those who have attended church for many years.

6. Schools ministry

One of our pastoral workers has built up links with a large number of primary schools inside and outside the parish. The schools come to the church for RE and local history. This is a significant area for increased outreach and we envisage this being a collaboration opportunity for both us and All Saints.

7. The Church Buildings

The church is a well-kept, grade 1 listed medieval building within a City Council maintained churchyard with no gravestones. Part of the churchyard is regularly used for the internment of ashes.



On one side of the churchyard is another medieval building- the Trust School that is Grade 2* listed. This building provides 2 meeting rooms. Attached to this are two “cottages” one of which has housed a Curate, but both are currently let out. The whole site is within what is called “Yardley Village” which is designated by the City Council as a Conservation Area and is surrounded on 3 sides by public parkland. The Church is a well- known landmark not least because of its spire that dominates the skyline of Yardley. Its attractive site contributes to its popularity for weddings.

It is well visited especially during the summer when it is open and it is also visited by a number of school parties. It is considered to be part of the heritage of Yardley along with a medieval manor house - Blakesley Hall - which is nearby.

In 2008 the spire identified as being at risk. We had no funds to repair it but a group of dedicated people with the support of the congregation and the local community raised the money for repairs that were completed by 2012. Since then the church tower has been repaired and the roof retiled. The North Aisle has been converted to a community and learning space. Repairs to the stained glass windows will be completed shortly and plans are being drawn up for a toilet and servery in the church.



During the restoration of our building we have learnt a number of important lessons:

- Having a significant listed building is not a drawback; it is an asset that encourages community involvement.
- Opening the church brings in people who would never set foot in church on a Sunday.
- We are making our church used and useful.
- Fundraising is fun.

The bell tower houses one of the 3 or 4 best peals of eight in the UK and these are kept excellently maintained and serviced by or through our band of ringers.

About 100 yards away from the church are the Parish Halls which includes the Parish Office. Both Halls, which have been refurbished and are maintained by the congregation, are used daily for the community and are a major source of income.



The Vicarage that is a recently built, secure, 5 bedroomed detached house with an integral garage situated some 300 yards from the Church.



8. Vision

- In line with the First Mark of Mission, our vision is the building up of God's Kingdom here in Yardley - being both a source of Christian witness to the neighbourhood and acting as a beacon to God's love for his people.
- We try to give God's welcome to all that come, offering stepping-stones for people to use as a way forward in their spiritual lives, recognising that St Edburgha's acts as a place of continuity for many families. Our worship is a source of renewal, strengthening us to live as witnessing Christians throughout the week.
- As we respond in loving service, we hope to meet people, both congregation and parishioners at their point of need. We see this as being not only in occasional offices, such as our number of weddings and baptisms, but also by providing social occasions, and in our giving and regular worship. In 2022 there were 14 baptisms and 10 weddings 13 funerals and 3 Internment of ashes.

We are keen to welcome and support someone who brings appropriate gifts to support and build up parish work and life, and to encourage and enable the congregation to use and develop their gifts in God's service here in Yardley. We believe that this mission is best developed as a team with each member playing their part and we take as our texts 1 Corinthians 12 and Romans 12 3-8. In addition we want to listen to what God is saying to us and to discover a Vision for us all and we look forward to being able to discover this together with our new incumbent.

St Edburgha's Church, Yardley

June 2023

Wanted: St Edburgha's 40th parish priest – are you the person to carry on almost 1000 years of worship, ministry and mission in Yardley?

Although St Edburgha's faces many challenges as we move through the 21st Century, we firmly believe that we have many strengths and blessings, for instance:

- a loyal and dedicated "core" congregation many of whom have worshipped and served here for many years
- a regular number of visiting worshippers each week, and big attendances for festivals, celebrations and memorial services
- a relatively varied pattern of worship but with a strong tradition of continuity and respect for the sacraments
- a tradition of lay leadership – people with gifts, skills, and vision who are able to take the initiative and get things done
- an openness to new ideas and approaches
- an active choir and a strong tradition of choral worship and church music led by our organist and choir master as musical director, and a well maintained church organ and baby grand piano
- a consistent demand from the wider parish for occasional offices, particularly "rites of passage", including baptisms, that offer opportunities for outreach and training e.g. for Readers and people going forward to ministry
- a marvellous building for the glory of God that acts a beacon to the whole parish, is popular for visits, and a place of continuity for many families
- a number of buildings that provide relatively well-used facilities for the congregation and the wider community – as well as a good source of income - and the potential for further development for outreach
- a regular programme of social fundraising events that are well supported by members of the congregation and the wider parish
- right of office for the parish priest of two trusteeships of local charities (Yardley Great Trust and Yardley Educational Foundation) which provide access to sources of funding, opportunities for engagement with the wider parish and something of a wider public profile
- an equipped parish office facility with the potential for further development and extended use, and the services of a part-time paid administrator
- a recently built fully-fitted 5 bedroom modern vicarage

So, we are looking for that special person to be our priest who is:

- God-centred and prayerful
 - whose life embodies their faith
 - who always starts with prayer
 - who is able to bring commitment, vision and conviction
- a “people-person”
 - who is a good listener and communicator
 - who is able to interact with all age groups
 - who is available, approachable and sociable
- someone who will commit to the church and the parish and who will participate in full church life, and who can engage with the wider parish
- a “can do” person who sees the opportunities and will not be overwhelmed by the challenges; someone, who sees occasional offices as an opportunity for mission, ministry, outreach – and fundraising! – and who sees the medieval building as a glory to God and an asset to the church and the parish
- willing and able to give a lead in our worship, mission and ministry, but who values, empowers and builds up the strengths and skills of the congregation
 - who can drive us forward but not leave us behind, and can develop and nurture the whole congregation in discipleship
- a pragmatist as well as aiming for the ideal
- respectful of sacrament and worship traditions yet able to value diversity, and willing to encourage new approaches
- a priest with preaching and teaching skills