

DISCIPLESHIP LEAD

Team Vicar serving the parishes of Wigan Town Centre & Central

We seek a priest who is:

- a **creative missioner** who discerns where the Spirit is at work, and helps others to do likewise and join in.
- a **relational leader** who draws alongside local church leadership teams in an empowering and inspiring way.
- able to **help parishioners grow as disciples** of Jesus in a manner that reflects the context and culture.

This is a rare and exciting opportunity for an ordained leader who longs to invest their time, energy and faith in growing mission-minded disciples rather than the business of running a parish. The role gives you a large canvas to paint on, working with diverse congregations and mission activities to encourage existing members go deeper in their discipleship and invite others to discover a new faith in Christ Jesus.

You will lead the development of mission and discipleship in the parishes of Wigan Town Centre and Wigan Central which work together and share resources as a single ministry 'hub'. There is real diversity here, from some of the most deprived communities in England to amongst the most prosperous in Wigan, served by seven churches including the ancient Parish Church which has just been reordered.

In the parishes are multiple partner schools including a large CE high school, food pantry, growing men's ministry, cafe church and other family outreach, and a major redevelopment of the town centre with its new artisan food hall, attractions and residential accommodation. There are no end of opportunities!

Importantly, you won't be working alone. You'll be part of a close-knit, supportive team which is a major attraction for those who already serve here.

What you can find in this profile:

The role explained p2

The type of person we seek p3

The team you'll be part of p4

The parishes you'll serve in p5

The parish mission plan p11

The wider context: about Church Wigan p12

Where you'll live p14

Church WIGAN

"I came to Wigan because I wanted to serve. This is a place that still believes the church has a future.

Chris



WHAT IS THE ROLE ALL ABOUT?

The focus is empowering local church leadership to engage in creative Spirit-led mission and grow disciples of Jesus.

You will be a senior leader in the parishes of Wigan Town Centre and Wigan Central. You will work closely with the Hub Leader (team vicar) overseeing the parishes, allowing you to spend most of your time to work with the lay teams leading local churches and mission activities to participate in the most important task of the church: to make and grow disciples of Christ.

- Be the chief partner and associate of the Hub Leader of the parishes, and a senior member of the Hub Leadership Team which includes a team vicar, lay leaders and other ministers.

- Lead on embedding an effective culture of disciple-making and pioneering mission in the local church communities.

- Provide close support to the local church leadership teams, enabling them to grow in confidence in discerning and actioning mission opportunities with a focus on forming authentic disciples of Christ. This will include working with diocesan officers to take advantage of useful growth tools and keeping in contact with national bodies and networks.

- Be personally involved in at least one fresh mission/ discipling project, demonstrating skills and leading by example.

- Get involved in the life of the church and local communities, leading weekly worship, being present at important celebrations and conducting some occasional offices. This pastoral work is not the 'forward' aspect of the role but is the relational bedrock on which it is built.

- As part of the wider Church Wigan ministry leadership team, advise the Rector of Church Wigan and colleagues in other parishes on developing mission and discipleship across Wigan. Again, this is not the primary focus of your role but will be important in shaping the culture of the church.

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

Matthew 28.19



"I've seen a deepening of faith and call to service among people. There are new sparks of leadership.

Wendy



THE TYPE OF PERSON WE SEEK

You will be recognised as being:

- **Spirit-led.** Your leadership is defined by following Christ, with a deep commitment to discerning the leading of the Spirit with others to inform your mission-ministry.

- **Relational.** You engage people with empathy, building trust through listening and presence, communicating clearly and doing the basic things well that establish confidence.

- **Creatively enabling.** You are an encourager who loves to draw alongside people to release them into God's calling, helping them to lean into a hopeful future they had not yet glimpsed. You are gentle yet courageous in challenge, understanding the necessity of people feeling ownership in what they do.

- **A great communicator.** You care about, and are skilled at, creating spaces where people can hear – God, each other and you.

- **Understanding of diversity.** You embody a generous orthodoxy, valuing the different traditions and needs in the parish, and encouraging unity in diversity.

- **Experienced.** You will come with some life experience, especially of the ups and downs that life can bring eg. conflict, resource challenges, and anxiety about change. Your sense of humour, resilience and ability to remain calm and positive enables you to be a non-anxious presence even in the middle of a storm.

- **A team player.** You know the value of 'we.' Your default is to connect, build teams not walls, and do things together, deeply appreciating the importance of mutual accountability.

Set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.

1 Timothy 4.12



"Slowly but surely the churches in the Hub are moving closer together and becoming more united. We've really started listening to each other.

Sheila



BEING PART OF THE TEAM

Being part of a team is important in Church Wigan. A core learning we have made over the years is that leadership is always plural. Always.

Your 'first team' will be the **Wigan clergy/ministry team**:

- Most days you will connect with the Hub Leader and other colleagues in Wigan Town Centre and Wigan Central hub as you lead mission and ministry in the those parishes.
- Every week you will spend time with the wider Church Wigan clergy/ministry team to catch up and pray for each other.
- Fortnightly you will gather with them to worship and discern mission strategy and tackle issues together.
- Every second month the team and chapter spend a morning together for reflection and spiritual formation.
- A few times a year the team go on retreat or simply go out in the evening to relax.

Let's face it: life in ministry can be tough, and in Wigan it is no different. There are tears as well as joy. But we've found that it's such an encouragement to have colleagues who love and understand you and to know they have always 'got your back.'

Another important team will be the **Hub Leadership Team** (HLT), consisting of a small group of locally-based lay people and clergy that meets monthly to discern the mission the Holy Spirit is giving us across the two parishes to see people and places transformed by the grace and love of God.

Each worshipping community and mission initiative is led by a **local lay leadership team**. Many of these are at an early stage of development and so one of your priorities will be to draw alongside these teams and help them discover what authentic discipleship looks like in their context and instil a hopeful culture of mission.

You'll also be a member of the **PCC**s of the two parishes but won't ordinarily be required to chair them.

TEAM WORKS



What's a Hub? Hubs are the way we resource and grow mission in Church Wigan, a nexus where people come together who previously would never have met. The hub transcends former parish boundaries, so that those who share a similar heart and vision for mission can work together to offer new ministry in a permission-giving, safe and accountable environment.



THE PARISHES YOU'LL SERVE IN

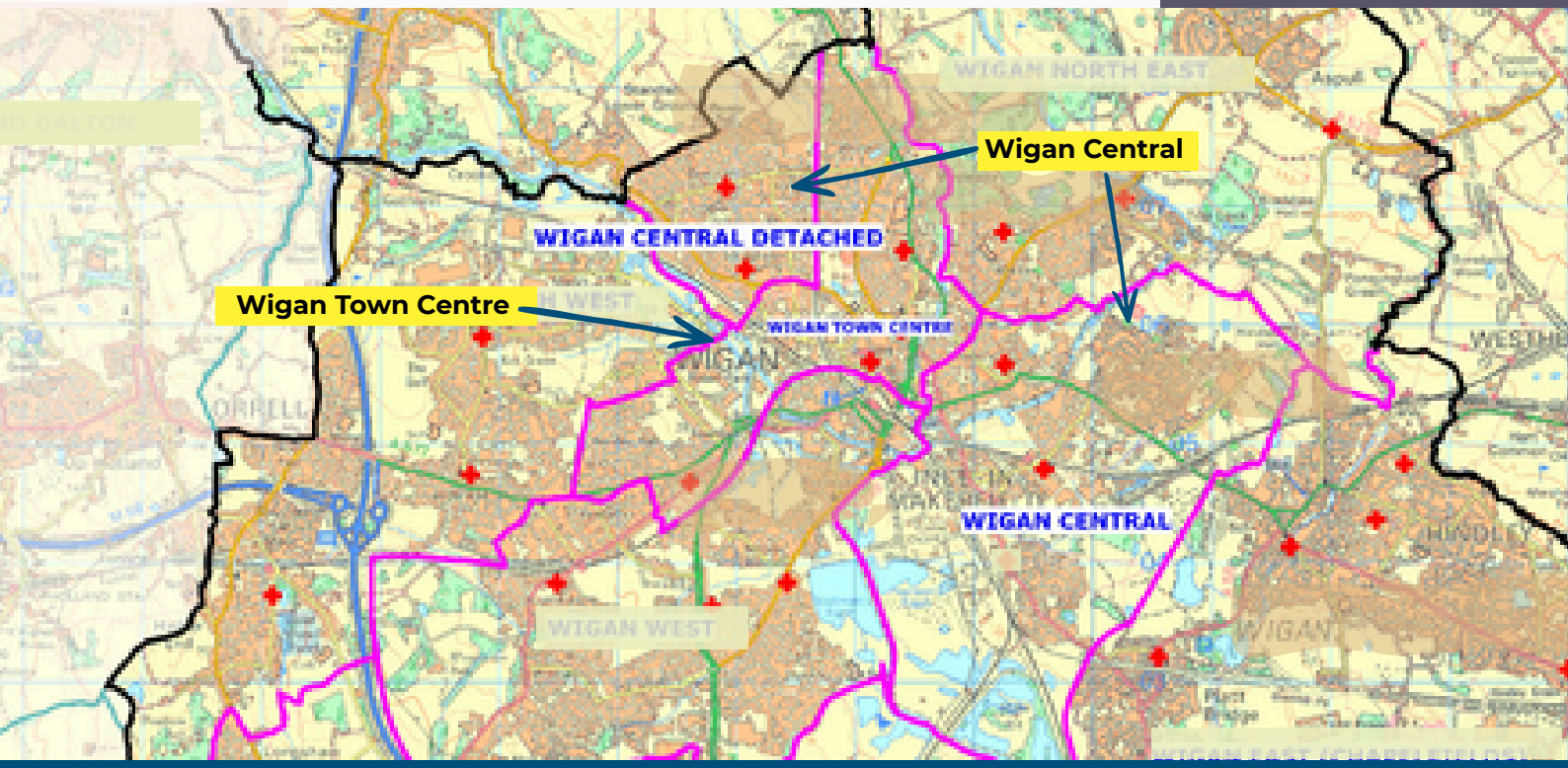
You will minister in the parishes of Wigan Town Centre and Wigan Central which work together as one hub serving a combined population of 45,413. The communities are mostly urban estates adjacent to the town centre. For sure, there is considerable deprivation here, with the parishes sitting in the bottom 6-8% of the national CUF rankings. Issues such as child poverty, isolation and working age poverty are acute. But this hardly tells the whole story.

Wigan is a place of welcome which values community. Within the parish boundaries there is a town centre being redeveloped around an artisan food hall and vision to bring back residents and lively activity. There is an active veterans' centre serving the thousands of Wiganers who are connected to the Armed Forces. A college with 14,000 16-18 year olds. One of the largest and best CoE high schools. The world's best rugby league team (certainly according to Wiganers), a Youth Zone and large grassroots sports club. A growing cultural scene around food and drink which goes beyond (but never forsakes) pies. An innovative Council and award-winning hospital trust, lots of green spaces and a burgeoning reputation as a great place to live.

A place of diverse character

Strong sense of community

Growing



This is a place of three W's: welcome, warmth and worship.



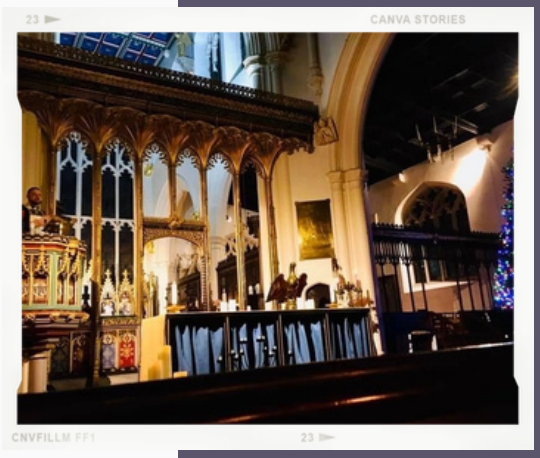
MISSION & MINISTRY IN THE PARISH

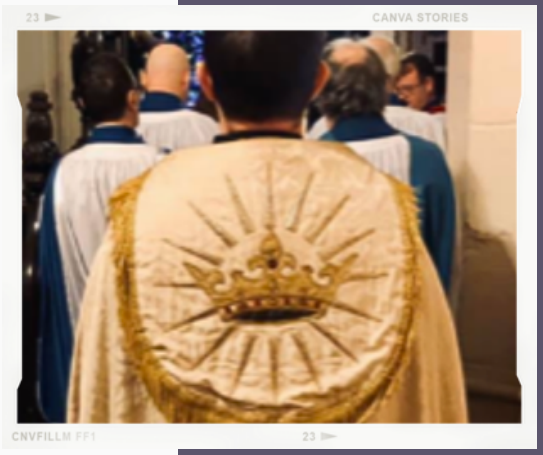
ALL SAINTS: WIGAN PARISH CHURCH

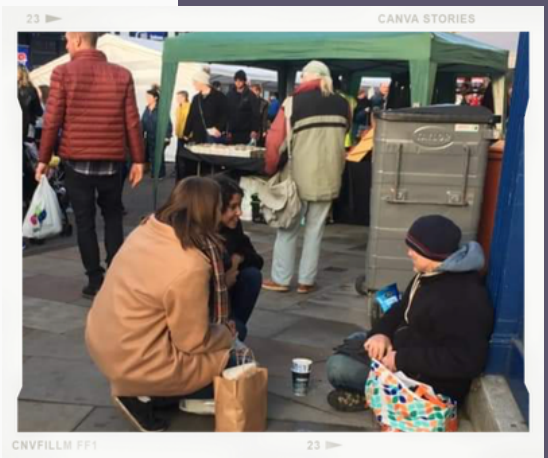
The historic Parish Church of All Saints sits right in the centre of our bustling Lancashire town and has been a beacon of faith for at least a millennium.

There is strong engagement in the civic life of the borough and the church hosts the town's major services including Remembrance Day, all military anniversaries and St George's Day. A recent £130,000 refurbishment will enable us to engage in mission and share our building at this time of generational opportunity in which the town centre is being redeveloped and people invited back to live in the heart of Wigan. Whether it's opening the church as a place of prayer where passers-by can drop in for spiritual consolation or as a venue for creative arts and evangelism, the options are endless. An early example of this is 'Holy Grounds', a coffee and donut kiosk which has started business in an outbuilding, bringing new interest and footfall into the area, especially among younger people.

Sunday worship is choral and in the Anglo-Catholic tradition, yet with opportunity to build on this in new and exciting ways. We also have regular Wednesday lunchtime communion and Evensong once a month







Mission to young people: a huge opportunity

In partnership with the Wigan Next Generation team, the Parish Church is currently seeking to grow a new worshipping community led by young people and serving their needs. With the town centre, The Deanery CE High School and the enormous Wigan & Leigh FE College all within a few minutes walk of the church, discerning how the Parish Church can be a centre of mission and discipleship for the rising generation is an obvious priority for us.

> **As a young person I like being part of a church family of people of different ages who all share a love of Jesus.**
>
> Cameron



MISSION & MINISTRY IN THE PARISH

ST MARK'S, NEWTOWN

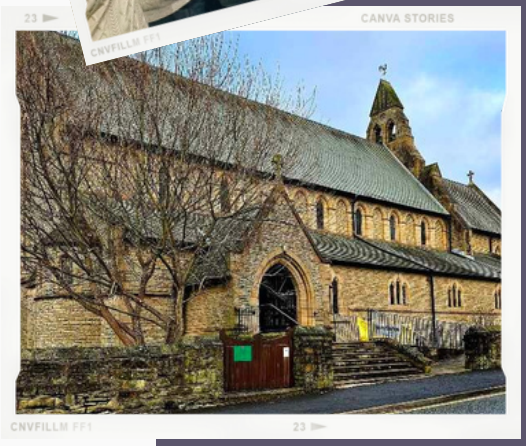
St Mark's is a welcoming, growing church in the evangelical tradition with ca. 70 adults and children, and is seeing new people joining for worship. A 2016 reordering has enabled the building to be well used for church and community groups alike including a weekly Hub Cafe, a place of hospitality and welcome. During the week groups like Boys Brigade, a toddler group and a language class meet, as well as discipleship groups and prayer meetings. The congregation has a close and growing relationship with St Mark's primary school. On a Sunday the traditional 9.15am eucharist is followed by a more informal 11am family service. During the second service we have our children's ministry, Hubbubz. Once a month St Mark's hosts The Well which gathers people from across Church Wigan for worship and refreshment in the Holy Spirit.





ST MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS, SWINLEY

St Michael's serves a large area covering Swinley and Whitley. Its worship is traditional, using BCP and Common Worship, and the Family Service involves the uniformed organisations. A variety of services are held during the week. The Church is family friendly and there is a Saturday Craft Morning once a month which is well attended. The church serves the local community well with a Coffee Morning every week, Lunch Club twice a month, *Learning Together* Bible Study, Fellowship Group and regular day and longer outings throughout the year. The church also hosts numerous concerts; these events are very much for the community where all are welcome. St. Michael has a dedicated team of helpers, who, clean the church once a week, serve coffee and tea, arrange flowers, open church every Saturday, tend the gardens and help to arrange outings. There are strong links with local schools.



"There's a thriving community all around the church and a real opportunity to reaach out to them.

Rowena



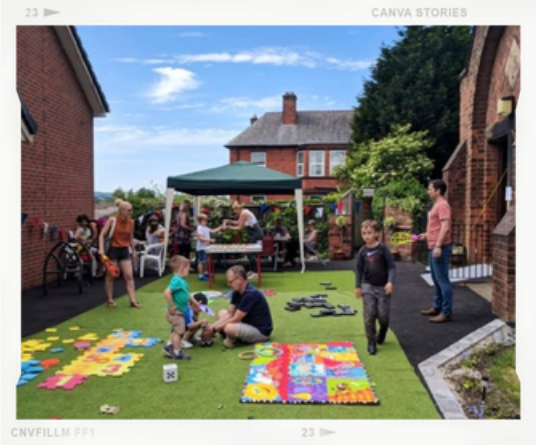
MISSION & MINISTRY IN THE PARISH

CHRIST CHURCH, INCE

Christ Church seeks to be a family where the love of God is welcomed, responded to and shared with others. It is of evangelical tradition, with family worship each week often led by two dedicated readers, lay ministers and a small music group, and Holy Communion once a month. The congregation of 40-50 adults and 6-13 children continues to welcome new people most weeks and offers a Sunday School. Links with the local church school are strengthening and form an important part of Christ Church's outreach, welcoming children and families in for festivals and working in the school. The church supports Compassion and Tearfund.

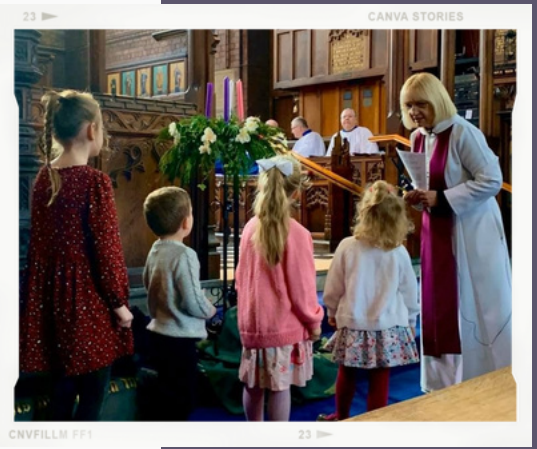
Built in 1864, the Grade 2 building was reordered in 1990 and offers a flexible space for ministry in the heart of the Ince community. A memorial garden for ashes is located in the church grounds.





ST ANDREW'S, SPRINGFIELD

St Andrew's is a friendly, thriving community. There are a variety of services, from Holy Communion with robed choir to Café Church, and lots of activities to suit everyone of all ages and to involve themselves within our church family. Groups such as Mothers Union, Friendship Circle. Andy's Kids, uniformed organisations including Brownies, Guides, Scouts, Cubs, Beavers and Rainbows welcome all. In addition, there are many social activities such as bingo, coffee mornings, school events, exercise classes bringing people together. Warm Spaces during the Autumn & Winter months have proved to be popular and important, and strengthen the church's strong links with the local community. Next to church, a rebuilt parish community centre offers different spaces to try out new ventures.



"We're regularly seeing new people come into church. We now need to disciple them!"

Jean



MISSION & MINISTRY IN THE PARISH

ST ANNE'S, BEECH HILL

St Anne's church building has been recommended for closure but the outreach and worshipping life of the church continues to be an important part of Central Hub, especially through the work of Annie's Pantry & Warm Space (see p.9 for more info). Plans are under-way to reorder the adjacent parish hall to be a place of worship while remaining a vital community centre. The centre and its spacious grounds is well-located to serve the whole neighbourhood and is used everyday by different groups and, by placing worship alongside community work, we can grow opportunities to share the gospel with our neighbours.



Currently there are interesting conversations with the Council and key local groups to explore how the church and grounds could be developed into a modern community hub. Discussions are at an early stage but, whatever the outcome, there is an exciting vision emerging for working together for the flourishing of Beech Hill.



ST CATHARINE'S, SCHOLES

This worshipping community is going through a time of change and challenge. It is proposed that the church building will be released and, due to building issues, the congregation has moved from the church and is worshipping in the parish hall which is sited as part of St Catharine's school. The link with the school is very strong and provides the most important missional opportunity for the church. The school serves the most deprived community in Wigan and hosts activities that build family skills and social capital. We plan to develop the parish hall into a community space and explore the diverse possibilities of engaging school families in a discipleship journey with Jesus.



"I've enjoyed meeting volunteers from other churches, which wouldn't have happened if we hadn't become a hub."

Ruth



TRANSFORMING PEOPLE & PLACES

ANNIE'S PANTRY & WARM SPACE

Annie's Pantry is an award-winning community food club at the heart of St Anne's ministry and a significant part of life in Beech Hill. Opened in April 2023 to support the local community during the post-covid economic crisis, Annie's has provided emotional, spiritual and practical aid to some of our most vulnerable neighbours to access good food and find friendship in the well-used Warm Space. Annie's is part of Church Wigan's *Lifted* network of social justice ministries which includes seven pantries and a CAP Debt Centre.



MEN'S MINISTRY: THE SHED

The Shed gathers men of all ages from right across the deanery. It is a safe place for men to meet and chat without fear or contradiction, to learn and share their experiences and faith. Its motto is 'to share God's love with the men of Wigan' and meets monthly with bacon barms and a brew, and with regular outreach activities blessing the community in practical ways.

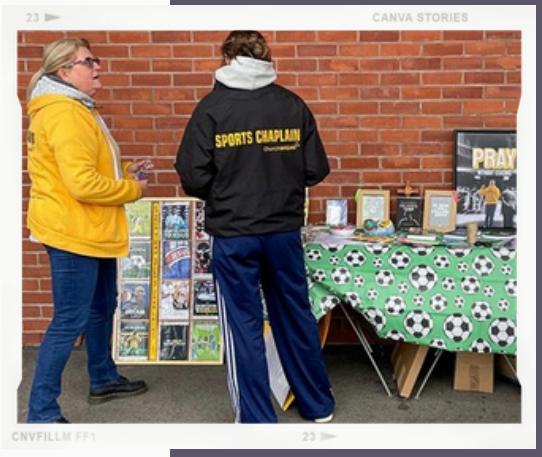


SCHOOLS MINISTRY TEAM

The parishes enjoy very close links with a number of church and community schools, enabling us to build strong relationships with children and their families. A committed schools ministry team leads this vital work, and opportunity abounds to explore the potential of growing schools-based worshipping communities.

MOTHERS UNION

We're proud of our three active and mission-minded MU branches. They are a place for prayer and social connection and are at the fore-front of a campaign to help those caught in domestic abuse.



SPORTS CHAPLAINCY

An interesting mission experiment has been to provide a pastoral presence at important grassroots sports centres. We're still discerning how to develop this, but this is another example of innovative missional thinking in the parish.

> **It's really good to have that extra support across the hub and to share good practice and ideas between churches.**
>
> *Janice*



CURRENT MISSION PLAN

The parishes of Church Wigan have begun a journey together named 'Joyful Future' where our mission is faithful to the leading of the Spirit and realistically reflects the talents and resources God has given us.

In October 2025 Wigan Central and Town Centre undertook a major exercise in prayerful discernment to identify the priorities we believe God is revealing and which provide the foundation for the mission plan for the next 3 years. There are four broad areas for development which we are seeking to flesh out:

DISCIPLESHIP: GROWING FAITH & FOLLOWING JESUS Our core work is to build up existing and new members into a mature, mission-minded faith in Christ. Key elements include identifying new leaders and teams and growing a network of small groups which help people develop a lived 'rhythm of discipleship.'

DEVELOPING OUR FRINGE Opportunities abound to craft more consistent and meaningful engagement with the many families we serve weekly through our extensive occasional service and pastoral ministry, creating doorways to explore a life with Jesus.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT Our pantry can be developed as a place of welcome, dignity and gospel-shaped hospitality.

REACHING OUT TO THE NEXT GENERATION We want to work with Church Wigan's Next Generation team to deepen our missional links with some of our key partner schools.

ENCOURAGING GENEROSITY The financial strength of our parishes is a mixed picture. Nevertheless we are committed to growing a culture of generosity and honesty about investing in the future.

The parishes will be able to draw on support enabled by the significant Diocesan Investment Programme. This includes a 'Cultivate Companion' to help embed the mission plan, a buildings team with expertise in generating new income from exisiting assets, and tools for discipleship and leadership development.

I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you.

John 17.20-21



The Church of England... professes the faith uniquely revealed in the holy scriptures and set forth in the catholic creeds, which faith the church is called upon to proclaim afresh in each generation.

Declaration of Assent & Oaths



THE WIDER CONTEXT: CHURCH WIGAN

OUR JOURNEY

The people of Wigan Deanery are now in the twelfth year of a journey of transformation. At the heart of it has been the forging of stronger relationships and a renewed commitment to help people grow as disciples of Jesus. As we grow both as individuals and communities into the ways of Jesus, then our neighbourhoods are impacted; the kingdom comes, in Wigan as in heaven.

To do this, we have worked hard over many years to transcend the parochial barriers between us. Together, we have been able to connect the amazing talent and resources God has given us to build for his kingdom in new ways, such as running a network of 10 pantries and a CAP debt centre. These activities alone saved the most marginalised households £750k last year and introduced many to welcoming spaces in which they have been fed socially and spiritually as well as physically.

Such community mission would have been inconceivable without the unity God has built among us and which is now structurally embodied in Church Wigan. However, unity is just one side of the coin. Just as important is our celebration of diversity - or, more accurately, our 'unity in diversity.'

All our worshipping communities are small or medium-sized with often very different cultures and social contexts. We don't want to conform them to a particular style or churchmanship, but for them to be more faithful and fruitful in their own historic and evolving identity. Thus, the task of parish 'hub' leadership is to empower local church teams to engage with the mission the Spirit has given them through close support and shared resources and tools. That's why we say, 'act locally, support centrally.'

The journey has been hard, and we've made mistakes along the way. Yet certainly we are in a more resilient and hopeful place than if we had never dared to set out.

Church WIGAN



"I love the way we take church out beyond its walls. There are people here who have really encouraged me to see God at work in our community.

Lizzy



THE WIDER CONTEXT: CHURCH WIGAN

SOME FACTS & FIGURES ABOUT CHURCH WIGAN

- Serves around 200,000 people in Wigan and its surrounding towns and villages.
- Has 2,600 members in a 'mixed ecology' of around 50 established parish churches, new worshipping communities and mission initiatives.
- These are gathered in seven large 'hub' parishes served by a single team ministry, pooling resources, growing connection and relationships to empower mission.
- Our *Lifted* network of award-winning social justice ministries reach out to thousands of Wiganers every week, building social capital and opportunities for discipleship.
- The Next Generation team leads mission to young people aged 0-18 and 18-24+ and supports parishes in outreach.
- Our Support Services team provide operational assistance to parishes in key areas eg. buildings maintenance, finance/HR, comms, funeral organisation, compliance and safeguarding.
- Is an early, major beneficiary of Diocesan Investment Programme support for parishes to develop their missional and financial health.

In our diversity we hold to one shared vision and mission:

VISION

Through Jesus
transformed people, transformed places

MISSION

We join in with what God is doing
to grow disciples of Jesus
among all the people of Wigan Deanery

Check out the website for more info:

churchwigan.org



"We've gone from a 'we only do this' church to a 'let's give it a try' church. I love this!"

Peter



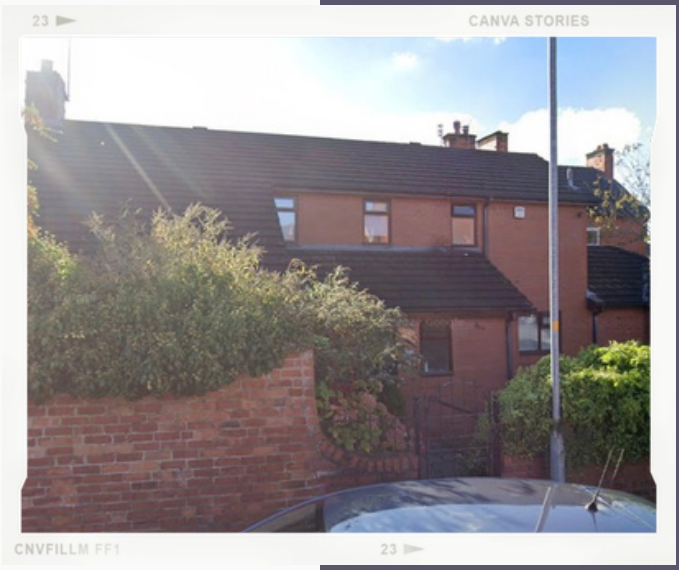
WHERE YOU'LL LIVE

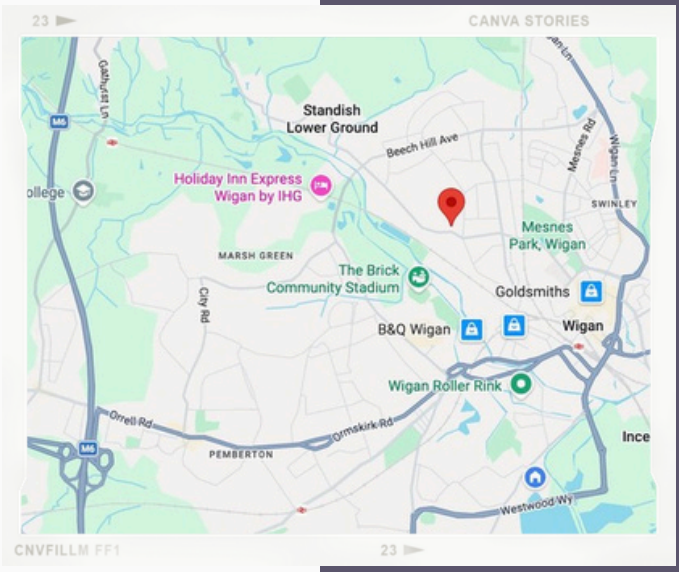
St Andrew's Vicarage in Springfield is a well appointed 4-bedroom detached house which enjoys a central location in the parish and is just three quarters of a mile from the centre of Wigan and all its amenities: two shopping centres, supermarkets, cinema, restaurants and sports stadium all within easy reach.

The vicarage is also well located for access to motorways leading north, south and west. Two train stations are nearby in the town centre enabling you to reach the hearts of Liverpool and Manchester within 45 minutes. If you like walking or cycling, the Leeds-Liverpool Canal towpath is a short distance away. If you've got the stamina you can reach the seaside in one direction, or if you go the other way you can discover Wigan's industrial heritage and historic pier.

A well-regarded primary school is just a few doors away and the fantastic Deanery CE High School and Wigan & Leigh FE College are little more than half a mile away.

Wigan itself is undergoing a multimillion pound regeneration of its town centre and is becoming known as a great place to live. We highly recommend it!





Want to find out more? Let's have a chat

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Church WIGAN

Diocese of Liverpool