Parish profile for St Mark's Englefield



St Mark's Church, Englefield, Reading RG7 5EN
www.stmarksenglefield.org.uk



Foreword

St Mark's Englefield is a single church benefice within the Archdeaconry of Berkshire and Diocese of Oxford. By any standards, the parish population is small, but St Mark's has, over the years, attracted a congregation gathered from the surrounding area who appreciate its style of worship, and a clergy house provided by the Englefield Estate has enabled the continued flourishing of this vibrant group of Christians.

In the pages of this profile, you will read about a congregation which aspires to connect pastorally and evangelistically with the village and its school, and which desires to be resourced for daily Christian discipleship. Beyond the parish there is a keen interest in the issues which face our world, and a clear commitment to supporting those who are less materially blessed. This congregation appreciates clear, intelligent preaching, and their ecclesial life is centred around the weekly Eucharist.

The previous incumbent has enabled deepening pastoral relationships and missional engagement, particularly into the life of Englefield Primary School. We are seeking a priest who will continue to nurture these areas of ministry. Whilst this attractive single parish incumbency might be a post for someone at the pre-retirement stage of life, we see this post working equally well for a priest who for personal or vocational reasons is looking for something less than full time and with greater flexibility.

There is a faithful and active lay leadership who willingly look after the administrative and buildings-related tasks and are keen to release their incumbent for the spiritual and liturgical leadership of the parish.

The PCC warmly welcome expressions of interest. Do feel free to have a conversation with the Churchwarden, and or to contact me if you would like to explore this opportunity further.

The Revd Canon Paul Cowan, Associate Archdeacon
paul.cowan@oxford.anglican.org



From the Area Dean

Welcome to wonderful West Berkshire! Bradfield is a warm and welcoming deanery, where mutual support and collaboration are at the heart of everything we do. Bradfield Deanery is largely rural, with stunning landscapes and peaceful villages, but also offers easy access to the nearby towns of Newbury, Thatcham and Reading.

The Parish of Englefield is known for its close-knit, friendly community, with its own unique charm and opportunities. St Mark's is central to community life and faithful witness to the Gospel through each season of life. The Patron, PCC and Churchwardens will be a strong support network for you, and you can be assured that the deanery will continue to stand behind the parish with encouragement and practical help however we can.

Bradfield has an active clergy chapter that meets monthly, and we are currently working through discerning our vision and reviewing our wider structure for how we can work together across shared mission priorities, particularly in areas such as children and young people's mission and clergy deployment.

We are genuinely looking forward to welcoming new colleagues to join in the life of the deanery and to share in this journey of ministry. West Berkshire is a beautiful part of the world and we are passionate about bringing the good news of Jesus Christ to each person in our care. If you're passionate about sharing the good news of Jesus Christ in rural ministry and making a meaningful impact in church, school and village, we think you'll fit right in!

The Revd Grant Fensome, Area Dean
grant@thebenefice.uk



The Parish

Englefield is a small parish situated in West Berkshire, close to junction 12 of the M4, six miles west of Reading and just over 12 miles east of Newbury. The parish is home to about 290 people and covers 3.6 square miles. The village community of which the church is part is vibrant, incorporating a range of businesses, including a market garden, garden centre, equestrian activities, village shop and tea rooms, as well as a flourishing Church of England Primary and a nursery school.

St Mark's has a gathered congregation with 80% coming from outside the parish. There is a good mix of age groups and backgrounds. St Mark's is welcoming of all and within our evangelical tradition incorporates worshippers from a range of backgrounds.

There are 63 on the electoral roll, 49 of whom are not resident in the parish and 14 of whom are resident. There is currently one service each Sunday at 10.30am with the Book of Common Prayer on the first Sunday of the month and a said Eucharist on the other Sundays. The congregation is usually 50, with up to 170 on major occasions.

The role

We are looking for a Rector with substantial experience in leading the ministry of the Word and Sacrament and with excellent teaching skills to make the gospel message meaningful for our community within the church and reach out to the wider community. This may be an attractive role for someone who is looking for a flexible working week.

Core duties are two days a week plus Sundays, to include a communion service, with baptisms, weddings and funerals as required and additional services at Christmas and Easter. There is also *ex officio* governorship of Englefield C of E Primary School and the taking of regular school assemblies.

The Rector has a pastoral role in the village and the maintenance and continuing development of relationships within the Englefield community are key. The remaining hours each week can be devoted to undertaking the ideas and objectives set out in Ministry and Mission below to the extent practicable.

Reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of duties are met by the PCC.











The Church

St Mark's is a thriving congregation serving the rural estate village of Englefield, Berkshire, and drawing a considerable congregation from the surrounding area and beyond. The parish is a single benefice with its own Rector.

The congregation is drawn by excellent, engaging, Biblically-based sermons and a traditional communion service each Sunday at 10.30am. The first Sunday in the month is delivered from the Book of Common Prayer which draws a slightly different congregation. The congregation is around 50, together with a small number of children who attend Sunday Club in the vestry during the service. Small groups meet for prayer, bible study and support. St Mark's supports Deanery initiatives as well as a number of mission and relief charities at home and overseas. These currently include PACT, West Berkshire Foodbank, the Church Army, Tearfund, Open Doors and responses to emergency appeals.

St Mark's is a church committed to orthodox Biblical teaching, applied to life, and reverent worship. We look for this to continue and over the years we have been blessed by leadership that has achieved this and has also been deeply pastoral.

The PCC exercises strong financial oversight and planning and the grade 1 church building is well maintained.

'To know Christ and to make him known'

Our overall objectives are to support, sustain and build our existing congregation, to reach out to those (particularly younger) families in the parish who do not currently have links with the church and to maintain and strengthen links with Englefield Primary School. We seek opportunities to support and extend the word and work of God, through proclamation and presence.



Ministry

1) To maintain the consistency of our services which is appreciated as a strength in regard to time and pattern of services

2) To further the welcoming nature of the congregation as a means of integrating newcomers

3) To develop Bible study and prayer groups in Englefield

4) To strengthen the ministry of the Sunday Club, providing a teaching programme for children supported by volunteers, concurrent with the morning service

5) To encourage the development of people's gifts in Christian service

6) To equip church members to understand and engage with current issues from a Christian perspective and to strengthen Christian faith in the secular world

7) To consider varied uses for the church building to 'bridge' community and congregation (eg seasonal services and concerts)







Mission

1) To visit homes in the village regularly to understand how the church can best respond to the following:

a) to ascertain how the church can better serve the village population and strengthen this association

b) to provide pastoral care (eg to the elderly, sick, new residents, new parents)

c) to seek to develop interest in the community in exploring the Christian faith and establish a group to meet this need

2) To build on the strong links between the church and school, holding school services in church (with parents), and through invitations to children and parents to participate in festival services at St Mark's

3) To consider whether, how and when joint plans and efforts might better further the mission in Englefield and the surrounding area (eg baptisms)

4) To fund our mission through 10% allocation of our income and through special appeals as appropriate

5) To make maximum use of the Village Hall for the provision of church activities for children/youth/adults in the village

6) To seek to establish the church community as the natural centre of village life





Past and present

Though the church is not mentioned in the Domesday Survey, there are records of a church in the second half of the 12th century and the earliest part of the building dates from about 1190. Today, dedicated to St Mark, it consists of a tower and a spire, nave, south aisle, chancel and north aisle (the Englefield Chapel). It was extensively restored by Sir George Gilbert Scott in 1857. In 1868, the tower was added in 13th century style, surmounted by a stone broach spire. The Englefield Chapel was restored in 1985 in memory of Vice Admiral Richard Benyon and his wife, Eve. The church has been exceptionally well maintained over many years and there is no backlog of maintenance.

An application is pending for the installation of a new heating system.

Except for a brief period when the parish was joined with Theale it has been a separate benefice since the 16th century. The parish plays its full part in the Bradfield Deanery, which in turn is part of the Reading Suffragan area of the Diocese of Oxford. The PCC is represented on the Bradfield Deanery Synod.

Income and expenditure are in the order of £56,000 a year and our parish share for 2026 is £25,800.

The Rector is supported by the Churchwarden and the PCC meets four times a year. There is an appointed standing committee, Secretary, Treasurer and safeguarding officer. The latest Annual Report of the Englefield PCC can be read here.

The position of Patron is exercised by Lord (Richard) Benyon. He lives at Englefield House and is an active member of the congregation and a member of the PCC.

Rectory

The Rector lives at St Mark's House, some 200 yards from the church. This is a three-bedroom property which has recently been extensively renovated including the installation of a ground source heat pump.

It has a pleasant garden and is situated in the heart of the village. The house and garden are maintained by the Englefield Estate. All utility costs, including council tax, are paid for with the exception of a personal mobile phone.







Expressions of Interest

Expressions of interest for the position of Rector of St Mark's are currently sought. Candidates would be welcome to visit the parish before deciding if they wish to make a formal application in due course.

Contact: Churchwarden, Paula Fenwick, paulapaloalto@yahoo.co.uk, 07850 603508