

Benefice Profile



St Martin's, South Wye and St Peter's, Bullinghope



St Martin's Church, Hereford



St Peter's Church, Bullinghope

The benefice is comprised of the two parishes of St Martin's, South Wye and St Peter's, Bullinghope, straddling the southern boundary of the city of Hereford and the countryside immediately adjacent.

Hereford is surrounded by beautiful countryside and is famed for its agriculture, especially its cider, hops and Hereford cattle. Its cultural associations include the Mappa Mundi, David Garrick, Nell Gwynne, Alfred Watkins and Edward Elgar.

The parish of St Martin's is primarily residential, with a wide range of mixed housing, both old and new. Its socio-economic character is varied, with pockets of deprivation, as well as more affluent areas. Its proximity to the city centre with Nursery, Junior, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Schools, and Secondary Schools make it a desirable location for individuals, families, and children. Facilities within the parish include a range of national supermarkets as well as independent local shops, sports grounds and swimming pool, community centres and public houses.



Medical services are available in the parish. Within walking distance of the city centre and with easy access to transport links allowing travel to areas further afield, South Wye is a desirable residential area and is popular with those commuting both to shops and businesses in the city centre and to towns and cities further afield.

Bullinghope is 2.5 miles from the city centre, and popular with those who want to live in a village and commute to their place of education or employment. Within the parish is Rotherwas, the largest industrial estate in Hereford which has historical links to the wartime munitions factory and the Canary Girls. It is the only major site in Hereford to suffer bomb damage in the Second World War.

Trains run directly from Hereford railway station to Cardiff, Birmingham, Manchester and London, while the A49, M50 and M5 motorways allow easy access to the rest of the country. The city of Hereford is the administrative centre of the County of Herefordshire, a predominantly rural county in the West of England, bordering Wales along its western boundary.

The city offers a range of shopping and cultural amenities, including the Courtyard Arts Centre, the Odeon Cinema, The Cider Museum, The Black and White House and Hereford Cathedral. The

Three Choirs Festival is an annual music festival rotating between the cathedral cities of Hereford, Worcester and Gloucester.



Further afield in neighbouring counties are events at the Blake and Savoy theatre in Monmouth, the Malvern Theatre and the world-renowned Hay Festival held annually in May.



www.herefordshire.gov.uk
www.courtyard.org.uk/
www.odeon.co.uk/cinemas/hereford/
www.malvern-theatres.co.uk/
www.hayfestival.com/home
www.theblaketheatre.org
<https://3choirs.org>
<https://www.theblaketheatre.org/>



Local leisure facilities include gyms, a leisure centre with swimming pools and various sporting facilities as well as the Holme Lacy Warner's Holiday Hotel. Hereford is the home of Hereford Racecourse, Hereford Rugby Club and Hereford Football Club. Who can forget the fondly remembered goal scored by the late Ronnie Radford against Newcastle in the third round of the 1972 FA cup?

As a predominantly rural county Hereford is surrounded by beautiful countryside ideal for walking, cycling, riding and other outdoor activities. The Malvern Hills, Black Mountains and Brecon Beacons are all within easy reach. The River Wye borders the benefice, with opportunities for kayaking, wild swimming, fishing, canoeing, Hereford Rowing Club and other water sports. Hereford is the home of both the Hereford County Hospital and the private Nuffield Hospital. As well as a range of general practices and other allied health services.

www.hereford-racecourse.co.uk/
www.herefordfc.co.uk/
www.wyevalley.nhs.uk/
www.nuffieldhealth.com/hospitals/hereford

Hereford offers a range of educational opportunities, from Early Years education, through Primary and Secondary Schools, to the highly regarded Hereford Sixth Form College. Blackmarston School caters exclusively for primary age children who have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities as does Barrs Court School for secondary age students. The Royal National College for the Blind, based in Hereford, is the UK's leading college for further education and training for the visually impaired.

Tertiary education opportunities are provided by the New Model Institute for Technology and Engineering. Hereford campus of the Herefordshire, Ludlow and North Shropshire College Hereford Art College as well as Holme Lacy Agricultural College, a specialist college catering for future blacksmiths and rural crafts. The new Beacon College, which is part of The Accordia Academies Trust, also caters for SEND pupils.

www.blackmarstonschool.co.uk
<https://www.rnc.ac.uk/>
www.nmite.ac.uk/
www.hlnsc.ac.uk/
www.hca.ac.uk/
www.thebeaconcollege.org/



Our Parishes

The two parishes in the benefice have different characteristics and separate PCCs but enjoy a mutually supportive relationship. St Martin's PCC meets 6 times a year, while that of St Peter's meets less frequently. St Martin's also has a Standing Committee which meets when required. There is a Safeguarding Officer for both St Peter's and St Martin's Churches. One of our Church Wardens is Deanery Synod Representative for St Martin's. The Rector has previously been a member of the governing bodies of Blackmarston School and the Hereford Academy. Further information about the parishes can be found at:

<https://understanding.herefordshire.gov.uk/inequalities/index-of-multiple-deprivation-imd/income-deprivation/>

The Mission of our Churches

In common with many parishes, both churches are concerned about aging congregations and declining membership and are keen to involve younger people and families in their church life. Our vision is to share God's love with all generations in our local communities, and we consciously look for ways to engage with other residents. We are aware of social issues in our parishes, including poverty, isolation, and a lack of youth facilities. We would like to do more to help address these issues and continue to offer a warm welcome to all who come through our doors.

St Martin's Church

The Parish of St Martin's is in the southern part of the city of Hereford with its boundaries running from the south bank of the River Wye to the southern boundary of the city. The area consists of



the estates of Hinton, Putson, Redhill, Newton Farm, Belmont and Hunderton, some of the largest areas of social housing within the city, as well as areas of home ownership within the locality.

The original St Martin's Church, built about 1154, one of the first stone churches in Hereford and situated 50 yards to the south of the old Wye Bridge, was severely damaged by cannon balls during the English Civil War. The citizens of Hereford, being loyal to the Crown, then razed the old church

to the ground to protect the city from siege.

By the early 1800s the population on the south side of the river had increased considerably. The site of the new church was chosen because the railway was due to arrive in Hereford, with the station to be built at Blackmarston and it was perceived that this would bring new housing to the area. The railway company later changed its plans. It would be another 70-80 years before there was any significant building in the vicinity of the church.



Queen Victoria generously donated £1,000 towards the building of the new church of St Martin's which was consecrated in 1845. This was built in a cross shape in the Early English style, with a clock tower containing a single bell which was originally used at the Great Exhibition of 1851 at Crystal Palace in London, to mark the close of business each day.

The font is the only relic of the past, reputedly found in a rubbish heap and restored to the parish. It is cut out of one block of stone and is almost certainly 14th Century.



Rev George Kirwood, Vicar at St Martin's, campaigned for women's equality addressing a public meeting at the Shire Hall in May 1878, organised by the National Society for Women's Suffrage movement. This is commemorated with a purple plaque in the Narthex. During the past 180 years the current church has been extended with the addition of the Sanctuary and other improvements to the layout of the building.

The church was reroofed, rewired and redecorated in the early 2000s following the "Living Stones" appeal which raised approximately £200,000. The room that houses the bell rope was converted into a fully accessible toilet. The Narthex at the west entrance to the church was converted into the attractive community room you see today. A new gas heating boiler was installed in 2024. Although in need of some cosmetic redecoration the building remains in good order and continues to be used for a wide range of services and events. A new organ was also installed and is now used for training future organists.

The church holds strong links to the original 22 SAS Regiment and is well known across the world as the last resting place for members of the Special Air Service, which was at first located at a base just off the main Ross Road. When the Regiment moved some years ago to their current location in Credenhill our link subsided.



However, older members of the Regiment and their families still regard St Martins as their parish church. Located within the churchyard is a dedicated burial area for members of the Regiment.



On Remembrance Day a service is held in this area, along with a service at the original parish war memorial on St Martin's Street. The main church also contains the original stained glass window dedicated to the soldiers of the Regiment, installed in the 1980s following an appeal for donations and partially financed by the Sultan of Oman. This window is somewhat of a shrine for former members of the Regiment who regularly visit the church, predating by some years the new window in the south aisle of Hereford Cathedral. The North Transept area in St Martin's is known to many as the SAS Chapel following its refurbishment when the stained-glass window was installed. A small Lady Chapel is located within this area.

In the early 19th century Hereford Bishop Percival stated that St Martins Church should not have been built as "it was out of the way and not really wanted". We believe that we have a church fit for the 21st Century, that still fulfils an essential role and is in exactly the right place – in the heart of the South Wye community, which our church continues to serve.

The Worshipping Community

We take our role as a parish church seriously and aim to cater for the spiritual and welfare needs of all our community. We currently have 74 members on our electoral roll.

- Clergy robe for our weekly Sunday Eucharist service at 9.30 am.
- Our Director of Music plays the organ for our Sunday services and tutors an organ scholar.
- Lay participation takes place during our main Sunday service: Sacristan, Welcomer, Server, Chalice server, Reader, and Intercessors also take part.
- Coffee and tea are served afterwards by a rota of volunteers.
- Until our vacancy, a midweek communion service took place on Thursday mornings, usually led by a curate, also robed. This is currently suspended during the Interregnum.
- Evening prayer is screened on Facebook on Mondays at 8 pm.



Most of our congregation contribute monthly via the Parish Giving Scheme. A Bonus Ball scheme generates more than £1,000 each year contributing valuable income to church funds.



Our variety of church groups include:

- Monthly Messy Church;
- Weekly Bible study ;
- Young at Heart social group for older people;
- Tuesday Coffee social group;
- Quilters club
- Our latest venture, Sunday School, is run by an enthusiastic group of volunteers



Local schools use the church on occasion: Carol Services, Easter Experience, and special occasions. Uniformed organisations regularly join in our Sunday services. Regular fundraising and social events including Harvest lunches, Parish lunches and Afternoon Tea Parties, Spring Fair, Summer Fete, and Christmas Fair have long been popular with the wider South Wye community.

St Martin's congregation actively engages with the music offered in worship, using congregational settings of the eucharist by David Thorne, David Ogden, Paul Inwood, and hymn based paraphrases of the ordinary of the Eucharist (variations for season and festivals). Hymns are drawn from a wide selection from c16 to c21, contained in the A&M 2013 and Hymns Old and New collections. The congregation enjoys traditional hymnody and modern worship songs cast in an 'Anglican' mould, led by the organ, or occasionally digital piano.

The organ is a very good instrument, in good condition, of two manuals and pedals which was transplanted in 2009, and is the only publicly accessible, wholly mechanical organ in Hereford. The current organist (in post since 2008) encourages its' use by the Cathedral School, Cathedral Scholars, junior learners and scholars from away (lately from Norwich and Derby Cathedrals).

Our current organ scholar takes her part in the music offered at St Martin's and is match-funded by the parish. The organ has been used for masterclasses by world-class teachers of the organ, Jacques van Oortmerssen and Prof Peter Williams, both baroque specialists, and also Peter Dyke, Assistant Director of Music at Hereford Cathedral. The music of the parish is augmented occasionally with instrumental music on wind and string instruments, and also with the music of the Hereford Church Singers once or twice a year, and who rehearse at St Martin's.



The LifeLink Chaplain

Collaborating closely with our clergy and based in the Hereford Academy our LifeLink Chaplain is engaging in all three arenas of school, home and church life building on spiritual questions and creating “sticky” faith. His work aims to create bridges between school and church, encouraging young people to grow as active members of an intergenerational faith community. The Academy’s motto of “seek to do good to one another and to everyone” is at the heart of all this school does. Belonging and unity are the cornerstones of our “Family”.

“Supporting young people and helping them to grow in faith is not just about talking and lessons or assemblies. Real faith grows through belonging, through serving others, and feeling part of the wider family of God.” Explains, Barry Stevens, School Chaplain at The Hereford Church of England Academy, the largest secondary school in the county town of Hereford. His work aims to create bridges between school and church, encouraging young people to grow as active members of an intergenerational faith community.



A member of St Martins congregation, is very well known for her seasonal post box toppers on Ross Road. Her vision for her weekly visits to the Academy is to bring young people into this



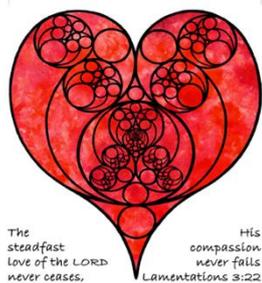
ministry of brightening up the local community. Students have been learning from her and together they are discovering how simple acts of creativity can be acts of service and witness. “It has been a wonderful way to connect the family of the school and the family of the church with creativity and bringing a bit of joy the community” Barry explains.



Perhaps one of the most exciting developments has been watching students become part of the Messy Church community at St Martins. “This isn’t just about young people helping out – it is about them becoming genuine members of an intergenerational worship community.”

Wye Bridge News

A member of St Martin’s congregation edits our monthly magazine. It is hand delivered locally and emailed to over 100 homes in the South Wye community. Our magazine celebrates local successes and achievements, keeping congregations and local residents informed of events in the local community and includes contributions from clergy, parish notices, and service patterns.



Finances

In common with many churches since the pandemic the size of our congregation has reduced, and this is reflected in our finances. We acknowledge this and are increasing our fundraising activities in the attempt to cover any shortfall and are optimistic for the future.

Occasional Offices during 2025

- 5 weddings and 2 blessings
- 33 baptisms
- 75 funerals / burials



Rectory

Belonging to the Diocese of Hereford and situated within the boundaries of St Martin's church is the Rectory, a large Victorian listed building now sub-divided into three self-contained residences. The largest of which is the current Vicarage. This newly decorated, spacious four-bedroom, three reception home is full of character and Victorian charm. The detached garage is in the large garden, which is mainly laid to lawn with mature trees surrounding the plot.

As our benefice covers an extensive area with limited public transport access to a vehicle would be advantageous.

Parish Centre

Adjacent to the church is the Parish Centre built in 1976, consisting of a large meeting room with commercial kitchen, toilets and two smaller meeting rooms all available for private hire and is used regularly by church groups and community organisations including the uniformed organisations who come to all age services and church parades on special occasions. The valuable Office Administrator and Finance Coordinator are based in a separate suite of offices situated at the far end of the building.

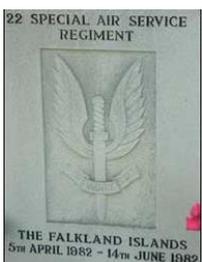


On the first floor are three self-contained flats, let via a local agent, generating a regular monthly income for the parish. Also owned by the parish are two 1930's houses also generating a regular monthly income. Onsite car parking for up to forty cars surrounds the centre.



St Martin's Churchyard

Our capable Sexton and his team of industrious volunteers work hard to maintain the whole area to a particularly good standard. It is a credit to the parish providing a place of solace to many relatives who tend graves there. Although now closed to new burials, cremated remains may still be interred.



A significant section of the churchyard is a designated SAS burial area with graves and interred ashes maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. The SAS graves are situated next to the wall at the back of the church and are easily identifiable due to their distinct white stones and grey wall tablets. The graves date from 1974, a reminder

that conflict is taking place.



ECO Church

Eco Church provides a framework supporting us to care for God's creation in our churchyard. We encourage wildlife in all its forms to flourish, providing birdboxes, bug hotels, a hedgehog house, log piles, and a shelter for wildlife. We compost our green waste on-site and avoid the use of synthetic fertilisers and pesticides.



We have achieved our bronze award for our Eco Church efforts and are currently working on the next stage. We continue to record many of the species of plants and wildlife spotted in our churchyard and we care for some of the flower beds assisted by community groups consulting with Scott our Sexton. Some areas of the churchyard are intentionally left wild at certain times in the year to encourage wildlife and the growth of wildflowers.

<https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/>

St Peter's Church – Bullinghope

St Peter's is a small church located south of Hereford, just off the main A49 on Bullinghope Lane. Our current church, built in 1880, replaces an earlier 12th century church, the ruins of which are



150 yards away in the grounds of the old Vicarage, now a private residence. We have access to the ruins, and we process from the old church to the new at the beginning of our annual St Peter's celebrations, followed by joint service with St Martin's Church and a community picnic in the grounds of our picturesque church.

Our current church is mainly Victorian, built for about £2,000. The architect was Mr F R Kempson and the spire was added in 1909. The Reredos behind the altar is a memorial to Revd E H Daniel who died in April 1885. He was Vicar of the parish when the church was opened. The East facing stained glass window is a memorial to Mrs Frances Caroline De Winton who died in January 1885 and is buried in the churchyard. Her husband, Robert Henry De Winton, was Churchwarden when the church opened. They lived at Graftonbury which at the time was a manor house.

The marble font, of an angel holding a large shell, is a memorial to Frances Annie who died in November 1878, the only child of Thomas Mountjoy and Isabella Fisher. In December 1935, a faculty was obtained for an Oak Lectern to be placed in the church and is still in use today.

Churchyard

In front of the church is a War Memorial to remember those who died from the Parish during World War 1 and later updated to include World War 2 and the Afghanistan campaign.



The churchyard also includes a memorial to those who died at the Rotherwas Munitions factory which was bombed during the Second World War. The remains of those who could not be identified are also buried in a communal grave in our churchyard. Our churchyard, which was extended at some point, is still open with a small number of available burial plots.

Bullinghope Parish

In 1866 the parishes of Grafton and Lower Bullingham were annexed from St Martin's to the parish of Upper Bullingham (Bullinghope) for Ecclesiastical purposes.

Our parish can be split into three areas: Upper Bullinghope and Grafton are rural areas; the church itself being located here. Until the 1960s there was a school, which is now a private residence, situated next to the church. Lower Bullingham is the urban part of the parish and includes the Wye Inn public house. Rotherwas industrial estate, the largest in Hereford, includes Skylon Park with a regular bus route to the city centre. The industrial area has a Greggs bakery and a café adjoining a reclamation centre containing several small shops within a historic warehouse. There is a proposal in the Herefordshire local plan for 1,000 new homes to be built in Lower Bullingham. Another 230 houses are also proposed to be built next to Grafton Lane. Although this area is technically in St Martin's parish it is significantly nearer to our church in Bullinghope.

Pattern of Services

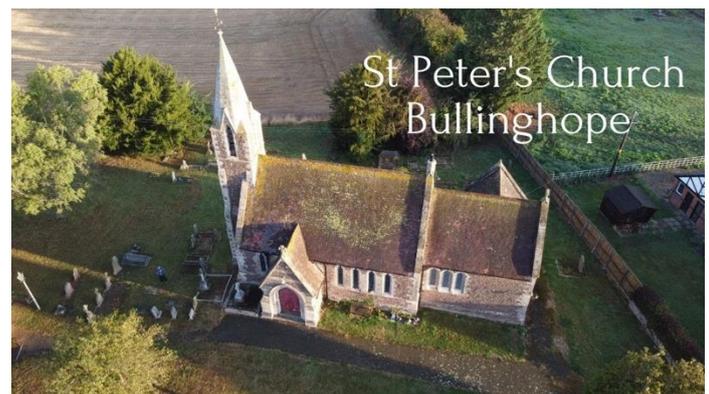
We currently have two services a month beginning at 11.15am...

First Sunday: Holy Communion using Common Worship and four hymns.

Third Sunday: Morning Prayer service with sung Jubilate. Churchwardens will sometimes lead this if required.

Additional Services

- On the last Sunday in June we celebrate St Petertide, processing from ruins of the old church and singing the first hymn. After the service we share a "bring and share" lunch outside in front of the church.
- Remembrance Sunday service starts at 10.45 am as we gather around the Parish War Memorial for the 2-minute silence at 11 am.
- Christmas Eve: First Communion of Christmas.
- Baptisms are held on the second Sunday of the month at 11.15 am.



St Martin's and St Peter's Bullinghope are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. All post holders are expected to share this commitment.

All appointments are subject to acceptable pre-appointment checks, including a satisfactory Enhanced DBS with Barred Lists check. We are committed to equal opportunities and diversity in Hereford Diocese and welcome applications from all suitably qualified clergy.

As UKME/GMH individuals are currently under-represented within our Diocese – we would particularly welcome applications from these candidates.

Applicants must have a right to work in the UK.