

**RECTOR FOR THE BENEFICE OF CHIRBURY
AND RURAL CHAPLAIN**

**The Benefice of Chirbury
Chirbury, Marton,
Trelystan, Leighton
Middleton with The Marsh**

seeks a

Rector and Rural Chaplain

Spring 26



Photo: Midsummer service at Mitchell's fold Stone circle

RECTOR FOR THE BENEFICE OF CHIRBURY

1.1 Geography

The Chirbury Hills Benefice is a group of five rural parishes with six churches, situated in the scenic rural countryside on the Welsh border at the most northerly end of the Hereford Diocese. It has three churches in Wales:

- Holy Trinity, Leighton,
- St. Mary's, Trelystan
- Corndon Marsh Church (within the parish of Middleton)

The remaining three are in Shropshire:

- St. Michael's Chirbury,
- St. Mark's, Marton-in-Chirbury
- Holy Trinity, Middleton-in-Chirbury.

Shrewsbury, the County Town of Shropshire is situated 18 miles from Chirbury and is the nearest major town; the Welsh market town of Welshpool and the small town of Montgomery are closer. The benefice is within the Pontesbury Deanery and is being well supported by clergy from across the deanery during our vacancy. There are two primary schools within the benefice, the one in Chirbury having good links with the church with clergy taking assemblies when possible. Chirbury also has a thriving village shop and a small café which welcomes church members for meetings. There is a Messy Church run by a small team from across the benefice which is held monthly in Chirbury church. There are medical practices in Montgomery, Worthen and Bishop's Castle.

There are intermittent local bus services, but they do not serve most of our churches. As a result, our new vicar will need to have means of traveling around the benefice - the rural and dispersed nature of our Benefice and Diocese means the ability to travel quickly and independently on narrow rural roads in all weathers is essential. A driving licence and access to own vehicle is desirable. The main Cambrian Railway Line runs through and stops at Welshpool Station. There are direct trains to Birmingham via Shrewsbury. The Cardiff Train from Shrewsbury runs via Craven Arms, Ludlow, Hereford and Newport. Manchester, Liverpool and Birmingham airports are all easily reached in under two hours. The major hospitals are in Shrewsbury and Oswestry.

1.2 Our Statement of Needs

We are seeking a priest who has an understanding of rural communities and is willing to have a strong pastoral ministry. We need someone to be a visible presence in the community, but we recognise this will be challenging given the spread of the Benefice. Our congregations are small and predominantly elderly, so we need someone who can relate to and encourage the younger

people and families, continue the work with the school in Chirbury, establish links with the primary school in Leighton and support activities such as Messy Church. One initiative which has proved popular with those who are less inclined to worship in church, is the Forest Church which has expanded from the long-established midsummer service at the Stone Circle on Stapeley Common to other venues, and we hope that a new rector would be prepared to further develop this initiative.

We understand the challenges of our priest having an additional responsibility and therefore need someone who can encourage others to be involved, delegate and ensure they make time for themselves and their family. We support and work together as a benefice, but need someone prepared to encourage us to do better! Although each congregation has its own identity, we all get along very well and are a very friendly group. It is hoped that we can appoint a rector who will:

- encourage young families to become involved in the individual churches;
- lead us faithfully and prayerfully to build both vision and strategy for growth;
- bring a sense of humour to the challenges;
- encourage others to use their talents for the church and the community;
- enjoy the beautiful countryside that surrounds us.

1.3 Our Future

We need your help to ensure we have a future and recognise this may mean taking risks to see what works and what we can change. We are open to new ideas, but some suggestions (some of which we have already started) include:

- Strengthen engagement with those families that have been either married or been baptised by having special services.
- Make the church and churchyard more open by staging events.
- Flexible service times to encourage people who are otherwise engaged on Sundays.
- Help organise us via a parish magazine and regular postings on our Facebook page.
- Consider special joint services such as Rogation Sunday, All Saints Day etc.

1.4 The Process

All applications should be made via Pathways, following the link on the Diocesan website vacancies page or Pathways itself.

If you would like an informal conversation about the role, please contact the EA to the Archdeacon of Ludlow, Debbie Venables, on 01588 673571 or via Debbie.Venables@hereford.anglican.org and she will be pleased to arrange that for you.

The closing date for applications is Sunday 10th May 2026. Parish Visits will take place on 2nd June and interviews will be held the next day on 3rd June 2026.

1.5 Notes from the Diocese

A Message from Bishop Richard

Thank you for your interest in this post and in the Diocese of Hereford.

The Diocese of Hereford is the smallest in the Church of England in terms of population, and we believe that our parishes are at the heart of diocesan life. We are committed to supporting local ministry and enabling ministers to thrive. Being a small diocese means we place a high value on relationships. While we offer proper structures - such as Ministerial Development Review (MDR), and access to confidential wellbeing support including accompaniment and counselling - we also know that informal support is just as important. The accessibility of senior staff and a rich diocesan social life contribute significantly to the sense of community here. I also have access to a discretionary fund to provide emergency financial support when needed.

Our Benefices are diverse - socially, economically, and theologically. We are fortunate not to experience the kind of aggressive partisanship found in some other places. On Living in Love and Faith (LLF), I have always affirmed that clergy will be supported to act according to their conscience, within the proper order of the Church.

We have a diocesan strategy, but it is intentionally light-touch. Our purpose is clear: to proclaim Christ and grow disciples. We shape our churches around three core values - Christlikeness, prayerfulness, and engagement. These values have been explored in diocesan-wide 'Years of Prayer, Discipleship, and Engagement,' but their local expression is left to the discernment of each parish. In areas where there is limited relational connection - particularly with young people - we are working alongside the national church on creative outreach initiatives. Thanks to our total return accounting policy, we are also able to fund innovative local projects.

I hope you will find the Diocese of Hereford to be a happy, supportive, and enriching place in which to live and minister. I look forward to receiving your application.

Yours in faith,

The Rt Revd Richard Jackson

Bishop of Hereford



1.6 Life as a member of the clergy in the Diocese of Hereford

As you will read, the Diocese of Hereford is a place of contrasts. We're geographically large, but our population is small. We straddle six local authorities (Herefordshire, Shropshire, Worcestershire, Monmouthshire, Telford & Wrekin, and Powys) and two countries (England and Wales), but we are one Diocese with one Bishop. We are predominantly rural, with scattered communities, but we have a vibrant cathedral city, several historic market towns and post-industrial towns, and serve estate communities as well.

We are small enough (in terms of numbers) that clergy can get to know one another and the diocesan staff quite easily.

In the Diocese of Hereford, we want to appoint and work with clergy who are excited by the demanding and exciting common task of "Proclaiming Christ and Growing Disciples". Our Diocesan Values encourage all of our church members to become more Prayerful, more Christ-like and more Engaged with God's mission in the wider community.

This means that we seek church leaders committed to equipping and releasing the whole people of God, empowering them according to their unique gifts, inspired by the vision in Ephesians 4. These leaders will inspire and enable others to actively participate in God's mission locally, focusing on growing leaders and developing teams rather than doing everything themselves - a collaborative approach often called Oversight Ministry.

Recognising that this model can be challenging, we provide comprehensive training and support through Ministry Development opportunities and the Accompanying programme - a mentoring scheme for all clergy new in post, whether this is their first role post-curacy or a new appointment.

The Accompanying programme pairs each new incumbent/priest-in-charge with an experienced priest who serves not only as a mentor but also collaborates closely with the minister and their Parochial Church Councils (PCCs). Together, they discern how God is guiding them to fulfil the plans and hopes outlined in the parish profile.

Clergy, who have participated in the Accompanying programme, have praised it as "one of the strengths of the welcome offered by Hereford Diocese." They highlight how it creates a safe space where clergy can nurture one another, share knowledge, and build supportive relationships marked by good humour and growing trust. Participants also value the programme's focus on relevant topics that address the challenges of adapting to new responsibilities. Crucially, it offers space for reflection on God's vision for the Benefice, helping clergy deepen their understanding and commitment as they settle into their roles.

1.7 Our Diocese – Facts and figures

Our worshipping community is made up of people of all ages and backgrounds. We are responsible for 406 churches, 12 Deaneries, 86 Benefices, and 344 parishes, serving approximately 326,000 people - we are the Church of England in Herefordshire, south Shropshire, and parts of Monmouthshire, Powys, and Worcestershire. We were founded in 676 AD and cover roughly 1,650 square miles, with many of our church buildings of historical importance.

Nearly 12,000 children attend one of our 78 schools and academies, although 40% of these schools have fewer than 100 pupils; there are more pupils in our C of E schools than regular

attendees at Sunday services. In 2022, we maintained over 110 properties across the Diocese which are occupied mainly by our stipendiary clergy and curates. We have the fewest stipendiary ministers but the highest clergy level per person simply because we're a rural diocese.

1.8 Message from the Rural Dean of Pontesbury

Thank you for your interest in the post of incumbent of the Chirbury Hills group of parishes and Rural Chaplain. Pontesbury Deanery, which prides itself on its South Shropshire location, is the most northern in the Diocese of Hereford. We have been a group ministry since 1973, and the Chapter continues to be committed to working closely and collaboratively. This has included ensuring that the 15 or so weddings conducted at Trelystan have all gone ahead this year, and further support is available to the new incumbent.

The clergy Chapter, which includes five incumbents, two Associate Ministers and three curates, meets bi-monthly for prayer, fellowship and business. We have worked very hard, alongside our lay colleagues to produce a Deanery Plan, which has mission front and central. We hope the successful candidate at Chirbury Hills will help us to deliver an implementation plan to ensure that the Mission Action Plan does not remain gathering dust on a shelf.

The Deanery has six benefices, one of which is held in plurality, and includes four churches, including Leighton, Marsh and Trelystan in the Chirbury Hills Group, which are in Wales. Large towns around us, Shrewsbury, Welshpool and Bishops Castle exercise influence, providing shops, hospitals and high schools. While Pontesbury is a village of 3,000, many of our churches support scattered communities of 50-100 souls.

Our ministry with children and young people is another key priority. Bishops Castle Youth Hub has funding to extend its reach into Pontesbury Deanery, and representatives from the Hub have visited Chirbury, with a view to supporting youth work there. We have hosted Deanery wide acts of worship, social events and mission focused activities. We are also looking to further develop collaborative ministry with Messy Church and Open the Book. We are just about to appoint a Deanery Support Officer, who will assist parishes with grant applications, faculty applications and other higher level administrative tasks to release clergy to focus on mission.

Deanery Synod, which meets four times a year, has recently agreed that we need to develop a focus on our outreach to the agricultural community.

The successful candidate will enjoy warm fellowship, colleagues who are keen to support whenever called upon, and the most beautiful setting.

We pray with you that you will know the Lord's guidance as you seek His will.

Greg Smith

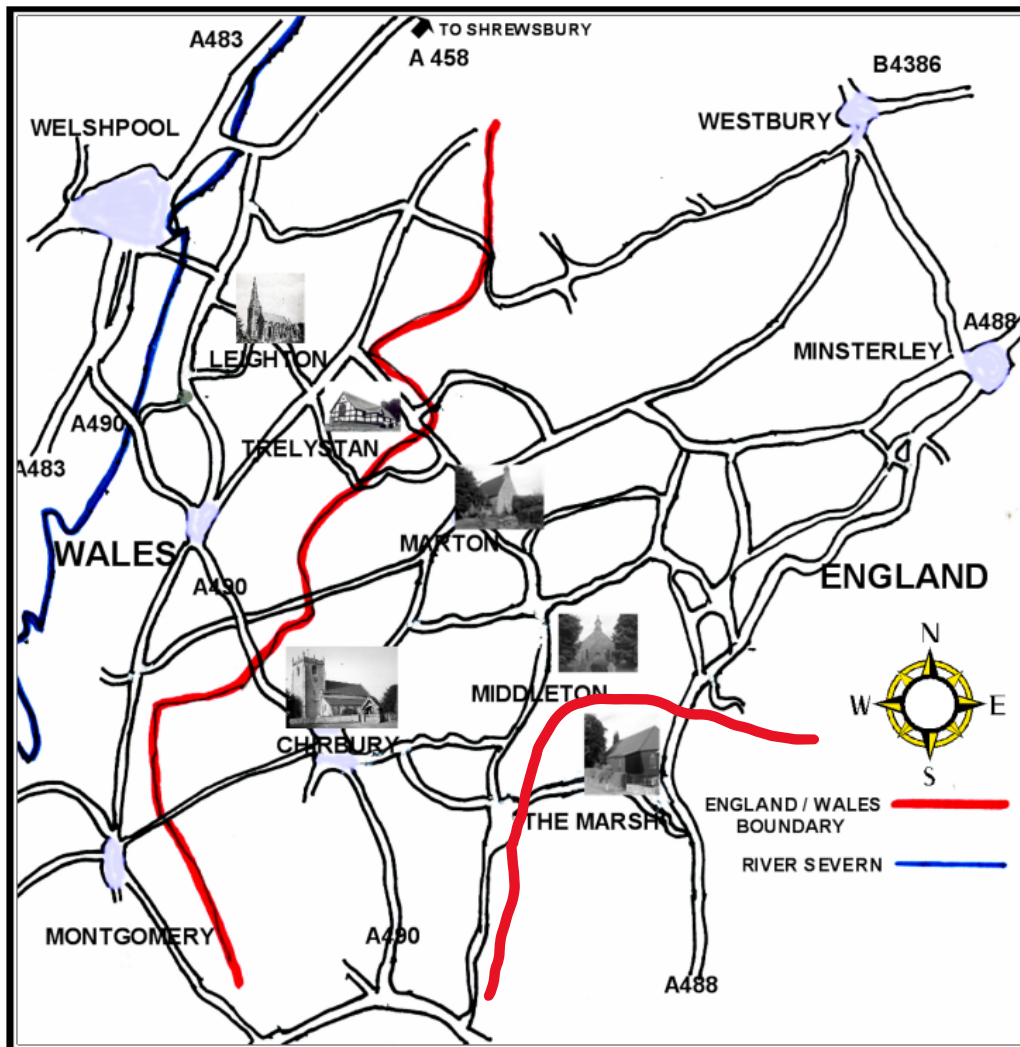
Rector: Pontesbury & Stiperstones Rural Dean: Pontesbury

2. The Benefice

There are five separate Church Councils:

- The Parish of Chirbury, St Michael's Chirbury
- The Parish of Marton-in Chirbury, St Mark's Marton.
- The Parish of Trelystan which has one Church, St Mary the Virgin, Trelystan.
- The Parish of Leighton which has one Church, Holy Trinity, Leighton.
- The Parish of Middleton-in-Chirbury with Holy Trinity Middleton and Corndon Marsh Church ("The Marsh").

2.1 Location Plan of the Benefice



3. The Parish of Chirbury

Chirbury is an estate village surrounded by farmland mainly owned by the Powis Estate, meaning most of the houses and farms are rented from that Estate. Lord Powis has just been appointed as our Patron. There are some Housing Association houses, and a new estate of 39 houses have recently been occupied, mostly by locals.

There is a shop with a cafe and post office, which is run by a passionate team. The pub is soon to be reopened. There is also an active Parish Hall run by enthusiastic volunteers, and a snooker club. A mobile library visits fortnightly, and there is a thriving pre-school nursery and primary school. People mostly commute to Welshpool, Newtown or Shrewsbury for their employment, but social events are well attended and popular.

The school, founded in the 1600s, is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled School of 70 pupils. The school was founded by Rev Edward Lewis, and it is now part of the Shropshire Hills Federation with Stiperstones and Norbury Schools. The new Vicar will be an ex-officio Governor of the school federation. The school feeds into secondary education at either Bishop's Castle or Welshpool. There are already good connections between the church and School, and we would hope that will continue and be improved upon. The vicarage is currently within Chirbury.

St Michael's Church is an impressive Grade 1 Listed building, dating from 1290 on the site of an Augustinian Priory. The fabric is in quite good condition. The churchyard is managed by a team from the local community with a small section contracted out locally. The church tower contains a ring of six bells that were re-cast and re-hung in 1992, and share an active ringing team with Montgomery and Leighton church.



Photo: Parading into church at Easter, Chirbury

4. The Parish of Marton

Photo: Knitted shepherds watching on at Marton church Christmas service

Marton is a small village of 75 houses in a valley between the Long Mountain and Corndon Hill to the south. To the East of the village is Marton Pool owned by the Marton Pool Residential Caravan Park. The owners of this site make the facilities, comprising a Bowling Green, Swimming Pool and Angling, available to the village. A small number of starter homes have been built in the village, but the congregation comprises mostly of retired people.



The major employer (300+) in the village (and for the surrounding villages) is Lowfield Timber Frames, who supply timber frames for houses. On the same site there are two other businesses. There is an active village hall, which is close to the church and is often used for church events, as is their car park! The Village Hall holds weekly and monthly activities, such as film club. There is no village school, with primary children mostly traveling by bus to Chirbury or Worthen, and secondary school children by bus to Bishops Castle or Shrewsbury.

The church, listed Grade II, has leaded glass at the east and south end. The Churchyard is still open with spaces for future burials. Thomas Bray, the founder of USPG (The United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel) & SPCK (Society for promoting Christian Knowledge) was born in Marton in 1656. We hold many events throughout the year to raise funds, such as Easter lunches and the annual Harvest Evensong and auction are often shared with the close-by Congregational Chapel - each holding the service on alternate years with a joint Harvest Supper afterwards.

5. The Parish of Trelystan

Photo: The popular summer fete at Trelystan Church

Trelystan are a small but friendly group who warmly welcome all newcomers. There is a monthly service of Holy Communion throughout the year, plus a monthly family service during the summer months. Although not all those who support us attend church regularly, there is a strong community spirit that is evident in our 2 main fundraising events.

We hold our annual Summer Fete in July, a long-standing tradition. This event draws support from the local WI and people from a wide area around, and is a very popular day out while raising around £2.5k for our church funds.

Our second major event is our harvest service, followed by the harvest supper and a fun filled auction of the produce that is donated. This again is supported by people from a wide area around and last year raised nearly £2k. There are also special services such as our Christmas Crib Service.

We are lucky in that our weddings have increased substantially within our church due to the establishment of Quaint Country Weddings. When couples wishing to get married visit our church they are drawn by its beauty and uniqueness and mostly choose to exchange their vows in this very special setting. This factor means that our congregation increases as couples attend services to establish a qualifying connection.

Our Church.

St. Mary's is a beautiful little black and white church nestled in the tranquillity of the hills of the long mountain. It stands alone serving a scattered community of cottages and farms and is approached by a grassy track through a field to an area of hard standing for parking.

St. Marys is steeped in history: there is speculation that the origins of this church date back to the 7th century. It is believed that the original church consisted of wattle and daub which was replaced in the 15th century by a timber framed building, which is the only one of its type in Montgomeryshire. In 1856 it was given the black and white appearance it has today, the church has one single bell, accessible at the rear of the church. It is open each day and receives many visitors

After securing substantial grants, the church underwent major renovations from 2012 to 2015. We are also lucky to have a church hall within the church grounds a rarity these days! The kitchen was recently renovated and new tables purchased. It can seat about 50 people. The church also benefits from two toilets sited adjacent to the hall.



6. Parish of Leighton

Photo: Leighton church gates decorated for the 80th year of Liberation

Leighton is just inside Wales, the Local Authority is Powys County Council, unlike the other Parishes in the Benefice.

Leighton was formerly an estate village based around a Tudor Hall which was replaced by a Victorian mansion in 1851. Leighton still has strong links with Trelystan. The village is scattered over the side of Long Mountain and overlooks the Severn Valley, Welshpool and the Welsh hills beyond. Agriculture and forestry are interwoven through the parish, and many of the monuments in the church yard nod towards these activities. Recently some new housing development has taken place in the village and more is expected within the next 10 years.



The old range of Victorian Model Farm Buildings now house a very successful stud. There are further workshops and industries at Welshpool and Buttington two miles away. There is no shop or pub in the Village. There is a local bus service that runs through the village.

The Community runs the 'Leighton News', a monthly paper that carries all the local and church news for both Leighton and Trelystan.

The Church sold its elderly Guild Room, and used the proceeds to make a major contribution to the construction of a new Village Hall which is attached to the Village School. The Hall is used by the Church and the Community for social events, Playgroup, fencing club and short mat bowling, yoga etc., as well as by the school for meals, assembly, games etc. The Leighton Primary School of 100 children is mainly supported by children from Welshpool. The Doctor's Surgery, Local Hospital, Garages, Shops, Livestock Market, Library, Railway Station and the main bus stops are in Welshpool 2 miles from the village.

The church's size and splendour is startling for this part of Wales, and is a Grade II listed building. There is an unusual arrangement of pews without a central aisle and a mausoleum. Recent improvements have incorporated a small kitchen and toilet. The Churchyard is still in use and there is ample parking for Church events. We are thrilled to have a newly commissioned Lay Worship Leader within our congregation, and hope that this resource can grow in discipleship under your watch.

7. Parish of Middleton and Marsh

The two small rural churches are closely linked and serve the area surrounding Stapeley Common, including Rorrington, Priest Weston, Corndon and White Grit. The common itself is an area of outstanding natural beauty and is noted for its stone circle and evidence of historic mining.

There is a popular pub and well-kept village hall in Priest Weston – the closest village which is used by the churches throughout the year for community activities. The closest shop and post office are in Chirbury approximately three miles away. The local area is served by school buses to the primary school in Chirbury and the senior school in Bishop's Castle.

Properties are varied but mostly offer family accommodation with few retirements and no starter homes available. A large proportion of parishioners are over the retirement age. There are a few holiday properties which provide additional attendance at key events and during the summer. There are many families living here with fond connections to the churches going back generations (as noted by the mapping and census project), however most newcomers tend to be retired couples or working professional people. The churches are surrounded by agricultural land, and most locals are employed in farming or rural positions. Others work from home or travel to local towns including Bishops Castle, Welshpool, Newtown and Shrewsbury.

Middleton church

With its quiet rural location and attractive wood and stone carvings by Reverend Waldegrave Brewster, this Victorian church attracts many visitors and their comments on the peace and tranquilly of the building and its upkeep are encouraging.

The congregation are young at heart and enthusiastic fundraisers and benefit from local help and input from many non-church going volunteers. Annual events have included a classical concert, a Christmas craft fair, bridge days, open garden events and regular coffee mornings. Our local potter provides clay for the making of pottery figures which he paints and glazes to



be placed at the Crib Service - which leads to a well-attended crib service with last year's collection of £200 being donated charity. These act as popular community events which promote the church and its place in everyday life. We also collect items for the local food bank. Middleton and the Marsh provide the start and finish locations for the Good Friday pilgrimage: a route of around 14 miles which started in 1982 which is a lovely social event with many supporters.

Photo: Summer concert at Middleton Church

Corndon Marsh Church (aka the Marsh tin church), White Grit

This is an excellent example of a corrugated tin structure being built originally in kit form in the 1870s to serve local miners and rebuilt in 1906 after a fire. The exterior of the church belies its beautiful, panelled interior. It is in excellent condition for its age. The parish holds very fond feelings for this little Welsh church.

Regular attendance at Middleton and the Marsh is around 10 adults, rising to nearly 30 for special services such as Compline after the Good Friday pilgrimage, Easter, the Harvest Evensong and of course Christmas. Members of the two churches attend each other's services.



Photo: Summer fayre at Marsh Tin church

8. Benefice Ministry

We streamlined our service rota once our vicar retired and now have 11 services across the benefice each month. We would be happy to accommodate changes to suit you and will look to help where we can. There is a core of individuals that travel around the benefice to worship outside their 'home' church – we'd like to encourage more people to do this so we can enjoy worshipping together. If nothing else, a larger congregation helps cover-up singing mistakes! Whilst organists are available for special occasion, none of the churches have a regular organist; and rely solely on a CD player.

Each church is supported by 1 or 2 church wardens, and most have reading rota's, together with cleaning and flower arranging rotas. We have a team of bell ringers that ring for special occasions at Chirbury and Leighton. Our Facebook profile is fairly active with over 270 followers. We use this to share details of events to the surrounding villages, which include many irregular attendee supporters, popular posts can receive over 1000 views, so people are interested!

We are blessed with an active Local Lay Minister who says 'Yes' more than she should. She leads the benefice's growing messy church, and takes various services. We are keen for her not to be overwhelmed by trying to juggle too much! We were also recently blessed with a newly commissioned Lay Worship Leader. We hope that they both grow in discipleship under your watch and guidance.

We hope to attract a candidate who enjoys country life, is sociable, philosophical, resilient, and has interests outside the church.



Photo: Autumn and Easter Messy Church at Chirbury Church

Key challenges

- visible pastoral work in the villages requires considerable driving on rural lanes
- the need to re-engage with villagers who have lost interest in regular worship
- a need to recruit replacements for positions which are currently vacant or have been held by the same people for well over 20 years
- There are children in the surrounding villages who attend messy church, this is growing but we need to attract more to make it sustainable. We also need to encourage those families to attend the family church services.
- The lack of facilities (WC, heating, plumping) at some churches has proved embarrassing at weddings and funerals, particularly when people have travelled. We would love to find an achievable solution for this at each church (Marton, Marsh, Middleton).
- Attracting a regular organist or musician would be a terrific accompaniment to services, particularly for the “5th Sunday joint services”

8.1 The vicarage

There is a handsome 4-bedroom vicarage, with sitting room, kitchen, dining room, and a separate good-sized room for use as a study/office, plus outbuildings and garage. It has a spacious garden, an area for a vegetable garden, and mature trees.

It is situated near to Chirbury school which has a cut through to the church. It faces into the garden, and the gated drive opens onto the ‘main road’ with a regular bus to Shrewsbury and Montgomery. It was refurbished in 2015, and has been maintained for private rental. Longer term, the benefice plan to secure accommodation with a better energy rating fit for more efficient modern living, but we hope that the successful candidate finds this pretty house to be a comfortable home in the meantime.



Photo: Chirbury vicarage and drive from the front gate

9. Finances and Fundraising:

With our small congregations, we all struggle to meet the Parish offer, but try and ‘over pay’ when funds allow. To achieve this, each church boasts a small but dedicated team that organise a plethora of well-established and popular fundraising events that encourage the community to join in. Some events are run in partnership with other groups, such as the local Young Farmers or the Marton Congregational Chapel.

We would welcome your ideas and look forward to trying some of them out with you. Please note, we do not expect you to attend every single event! We have done all sorts of things, including blind Art auctions and Gin tasting nights, but some of the regular events include:

Pet Services	Summer Fête	Harvest Supper
Coffee Mornings	Bluebell Walk	Bonfire and Fireworks night
Jumble sales	Easter lunches	Sponsored Walks / Bike Rides
Classical concerts	Harvest Auctions	Bridge days with lunch
Open gardens	Xmas craft fayres	Making pottery crib figures
Good Friday pilgrimage		

Many of us use the Parish Giving scheme, and there are no major debts. We currently produce individual accounts, but are keen to investigate using a paid shared resource to accommodate this. Accounts can be seen in the Appendix if you're into that kind of thing. Your expenses (printing etc) will be divided between the 5 parishes.

Our current Parish Offer:

- Chirbury: £6.7k
- Middleton and Marsh: £8k
- Leighton: £10k
- Marton; £6k
- Trelystan: £3.5k

10. Our Buildings:

Chirbury Church



Marton Church



Leighton Church



Middleton Church



Trelystan Church



The Marsh tin church



Appendix: Finance

St Mark's Church Marton			
Source	Income	Expenditure	Reserves
Collection	£1,000		
Fund Raising	£2,500		
Donations	£200		
Total	£3,700		
Parish Share		£4,000	
Insurance		£1,000	
Electricity		£400	
Vicar's Expenses		£300	
Fees		£35	
Churchyard		£250	
Total		£5,985	
Unrestricted Funds			£13,000
Restricted Funds			£8,000

Holy Trinity Church Middleton and The Marsh Church

Profit and Loss Account

	Year 2023	Year 2024
Income		
General Income		
Service Collections	2529.81	2878.35
Donations	413	375
Fund Raising Events	5376.2	5033.9
Funeral	151	905
Headstone	316	35
PGS	3091.51	3401.2
Floats	80	0
Wedding	0	560
Up Keep of Church Yard	0	410
British Legion	0	161.9
Total	<u>11957.52</u>	<u>13760.35</u>
Other Income		
Wayleave	3.68	3.8
Gift Refund	521.31	912.2
Interest Rec'd	127.48	363.71
Nationwide	3000	0
Wakeman Trust interest recd	869.46	0
Wakeman Trust interst recd previous years	0	0
Total other income	<u>4521.93</u>	<u>1279.71</u>
Total Income	<u><u>16479.45</u></u>	<u><u>15040.06</u></u>

St. Mary's Parish Church, Trelystan
Financial Statements for the year Ended 31 December 2024

		Total 2024
Cash at bank and in hand 1 Jan 2024		£53,249.58
Receipts		
Voluntary receipts:		
	Planned giving	£354.91
	Donations & offertory box	£805.13
	Collections at services	£1,529.32
		£2,689.36
Parochial fees		£7,600.00
Bequests		£0.00
Interest		£501.20
Fund raising (Gross)		£4,289.96
Utilities		£0.00
Miscellaneous income		£0.00
Total receipts		£15,080.52
Payments		
Church activities		
	Parish offer	£6,000.00
	Clergy costs	£495.36
	Utilities	£1,493.65
	Mission giving and donations	£25.00
	Buildings, grounds & contents	£5,555.62
	Fees to Diocese	£3,133.00
Miscellaneous payments		£0.00
		£16,702.63
Fund raising costs		£582.26
Total payments		£17,284.89
Excess / shortfall receipts over payments		-£2,204.37
Cash at bank and in hand 31 Dec 2024		£51,045.21

Leighton
Accounts 2024*

Income		Expenditure	
Interest	1,987	Insurance	3,914
PGS	6,406	Electric & water	606
Collection	2,357	Maintenance	1,477
Fees	1,869	Churchyard	636
British Legion	283	Expenses	300
Donations	3,089	Fire Ext Chubb	474
Restrictive Don	2537		
Church Yard	622		
		Parish share	9,000
TOTAL	19,147		16,407
	16,407		
Balance	2,740		

*Note Leighton has Restrictive funds for Church Repair and Churchyard Maintenance

St Michaels Church Chirbury Finance Estimate 2026			
Income		Expenditure	
Interest	220	Insurance	2500
PGS	2000	Calor/Htf	250
Collection	2000	Maintenance	600
Fees	2000	Churchyard	800
Donations	500	Expenses	300
Fund Raising	1500		
Lights	160	Parish Offer	7250
TOTAL	8380		11700
Shortfall	3320		
Balance	11700		11700
Shortfall covered by			
a.	Using Reserves		
b.	Increasing PGS		
c.	Increasing Collection		
d.	Increase Fund Raising		
Shortfall removed by reducing Parish Offer			
Parish Offer reduced to approx £4,000			

RURAL CHAPLAIN

About the Borderlands Rural Chaplaincy

Borderlands Rural Chaplaincy (BRC) is an ecumenical chaplaincy co-hosted by the West Midlands District and the Shropshire and Marches Circuit of the Methodist Church, and Hereford Diocese. It is geographically focussed on the Welsh Marches, especially Herefordshire and South Shropshire.

Its objectives are:

- Pastoral care of the land-based industries, especially farming and forestry
- Advocacy on behalf of the social health and well-being of the land-based sector
- Helping the church to reflect on, and enhance its effectiveness to, rural ministry

A full time Lead Agricultural Chaplain, David Gwatkin, is employed by the chaplaincy and there are a number of volunteer chaplains deployed across the region. To support its chaplains, Borderlands has developed a Management Group that oversees and supports the chaplaincy team, and there are also opportunities for meetings of the chaplaincy team members (“mucky boots meetings”) and occasional training events. We would look to create a local support group for the post-holder and will also provide an induction and mentoring process to assist in the development of their role.

There is a third tier of governance for BRC, which is a Steering Group constituted by the District, Circuit and Diocese to give strategic and financial oversight. Chaplains are not normally expected to attend Steering Group meetings, but we do encourage their feedback, via the Management Group, to ensure that we are meeting chaplains’ needs and offering appropriate support.

About the Rural Chaplain Role

Role Purpose

The purpose of this role is to offer pastoral support to farmers, including young farmers, farming families, agricultural communities and ancillary services, primarily across South Shropshire. The postholder will work closely with the Agricultural Rural Chaplaincy Lead and will report to the Borderlands Rural Chaplaincy Management Group.

Responsibilities

The Rural Chaplain will be responsible for:

- Providing a visible and tangible Chaplaincy presence at significant events and gatherings throughout the agricultural year.
- Cultivating a comprehensive understanding of the key issues affecting the farming community.
- Building relationships with local agencies and charities where appropriate,
- Building relationships with ecumenical partners and external stakeholders.
- Undertaking casework and providing Chaplaincy support to the community within BRC safeguarding frameworks.
- Responding to the pastoral needs that emerge from engagement, in partnership with other agencies where appropriate.
- Participating in the Muddy Boots volunteers peer support group.
- Engaging with appropriate networks to share knowledge across the rural community and promote spiritual, economic, and social well-being.
- Providing appropriating communications content to the chaplaincy team.
- Attending Borderlands Rural Chaplaincy Management Group meetings.
- Attending appropriate CPD training as agreed.

Agricultural rural chaplains are people with a passionate heart and a commitment to the land-based community. Their motivation arises from their Christian faith, and they are expected to exercise that faith with discretion and integrity. We encourage chaplains to see themselves as members of the ecumenical chaplaincy team, and to operate across denominational boundaries. It has always been part of the chaplaincy ethos to work alongside farming organisations and secular agencies (e.g. mental health charities, local support networks) in facilitating pastoral care, and participation in local networking opportunities is to be encouraged. Borderlands will work alongside you to maximise these and ensure that appropriate networks can be developed.

In the role as a Rural Chaplain you would be expected to be deployable outside of the Benefice boundaries when engaged in chaplaincy work – this is likely to be confined to south Shropshire and, occasionally, parts of Powys. We are always aware of the open-ended nature of pastoral work, so reviews would be held to ensure that chaplains did not become overstretched. When deployed on chaplaincy work Borderlands would pay expenses and chaplains would come under its insurance cover.

Networking is important for pastoral responses, but it also contributes to raising the profile of the chaplaincy. There are many potential opportunities, such as local agricultural shows, markets, young farmers clubs, and farmers breakfasts' events (Borderlands operates a series of these referred to as "Butty Vans" and can facilitate establishing a local Butty Van if required).

We also encourage chaplains to contribute to the Borderlands newsletter, website and social media outputs, in conjunction with our Communications team.

If you would like an informal conversation about the role, please contact the Archdeacon of Ludlow's EA, Debbie Venables, via Debbie.Venables@hereford.anglican.org or 01588 673571 and she will be pleased to arrange that for you.