



St Nicholas Poling Pre conquest

Parish Profile



Poling Village and Parish

Poling lies down a lane opening off the A27 among flat fields and is one of the few villages near the coast to remain undeveloped. Much of the village is over 150 years old and has many areas of conservation and listed buildings including St Johns Priory of The Knights Templars.

The churchyard is the last resting place of both Lord Colin Cowdrey, the great English cricketer, as well as the Victorian explorer Sir Harry Johnston.

The Church and village itself are set on a South Coast tidal Ford on the old Roman South Coast Road. The area around the village is farmed, and the principal Farm and the Old Vicarage adjoin the Church

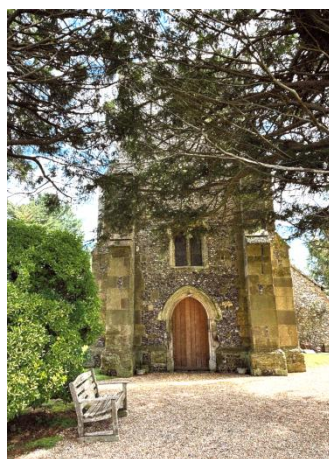
Poling is a gem of a rural coastal plain village on a one mile strip country lane with a population of less than 175, although spread out, the community thrives and has a distinctive sense of place. It remains largely untouched over the past century with no “new builds” in the 50 years and has no second homes.

The village houses mainly working families with children and retired people, with some commuters. It has formed a distinct community with its own internal social and religious life.

The village has no community centre except the Church, and it is the centre of the Community and is used for village meetings and social functions.



The Listed organ



The west door



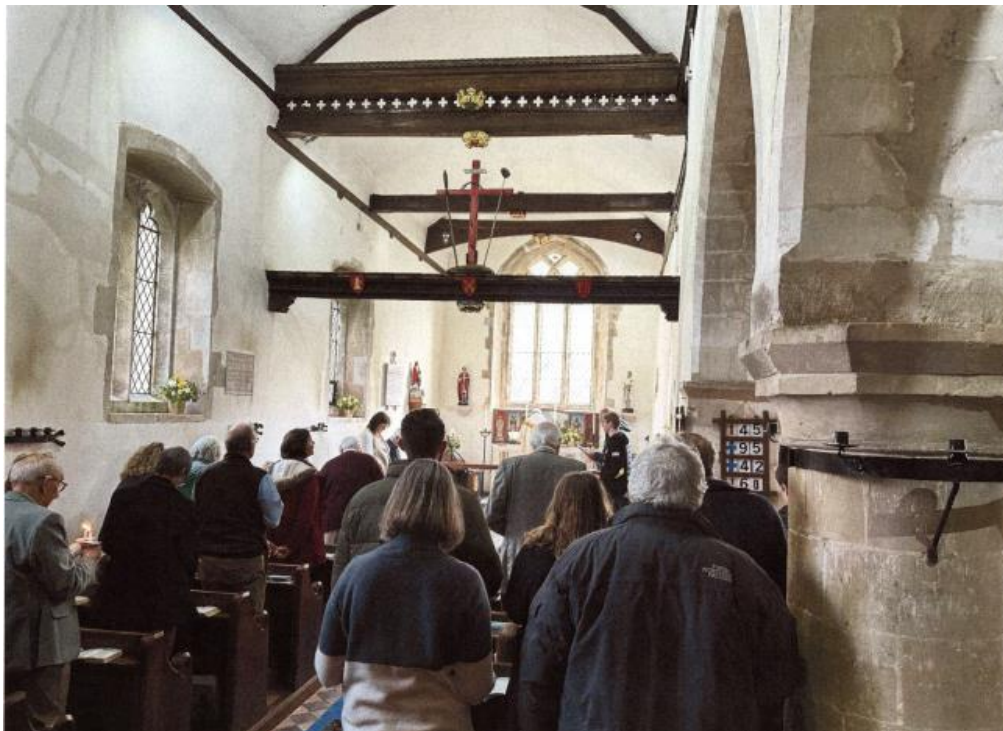
A recent wedding

The Church

The Church dates to the Saxon era with 12th and 14th century additions and some Victorian renovation including the retention of the pews. St Nicholas Church is situated in the centre of the Poling village. It is a 10 -15 minute drive from the Vicarage in Burpham, and accessed by a 300 yard walk up the Church footpath.

The Church Roll numbers 57 and the weekend attendance at the Church is normally between 18 and 25. On Feast days the numbers rise substantially depending on the season and events. The Church seats about 50 in comfort, although we have managed many more for funerals and weddings. The Fabric is in moderately good order, well heated and lit. The Church is listed Grade 1. The listed Organ in good order and was made locally in Arundel by Gardener and Sons at the turn of the 19th century. There is currently no choir. The Church is supported by The Friends of Poling Charity which has sufficient funds to augment the Parish income if necessary. The PCC is solvent and meets its Parish share to the Deanery, the Diocese and charities being supported by a contribution from The Friends of Poling Church and Community, a registered Charity

The Church retains the 1662 Eucharist services and has 3 sung Communion services a month at 9.00 a.m, there being no regular service on the 3rd Sunday.



A recent congregation

Administration

Since 2011 the Benefice of Poling has been held in plurality with the Benefice of Burpham, although the Benefice has been suspended since 1972. Each parish is distinct in its character and charism and we need to develop a stronger culture of shared life whilst rejoicing in our particularities.

Poling Parochial Church council meetings are held twice a year and the day to day running of the Church is managed by a small standing Committee. Work on maintaining and improving the Church has continued during the present inter-regnum. The future plan is to dedicate the side chapel in the South aisle to the RAF in memory of the wartime Radar Station, at RAF Poling.



A church breakfast



The Patronal Lunch

Social and Pastoral.

The congregation regularly meet socially after Church and maintains social events. These include occasional film shows, monthly church breakfasts, coffee mornings and seasonal events.

There are plans now being made for a Music and Organ Festival in the spring of 2025 to follow on from the successful Church Fete of 2024, with additional sung services.



The Queen's tree planting

Financial

The Church income is modest, and is supported by the “Friends” charity which is then sufficient to cover the running expenses of the Church. With the support of the “Friends” Charity it has adequate funds to meet this requirement.

“The Friends of Poling Church and Community”, a registered Charity, was formed by the villagers and its objects fully align with that of the P.C.C. These objects are to maintain the Church and encourage the worship of the villagers in St Nicholas church. The Charity undertakes various charity events to support this.



Saxon window



Saxon Font



1747 poor box

Candidates

The PCC is seeking a dedicated House for Duty Priest following all the joy and power of the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ.

With close and prayerful co-operation under the guidance of the new incumbent we hope to grow both our congregation and community in Poling.

The Future

Although Poling rests on prime farming land, it is possible that within the next generation there will be an increase of housing in the parish. We watch with

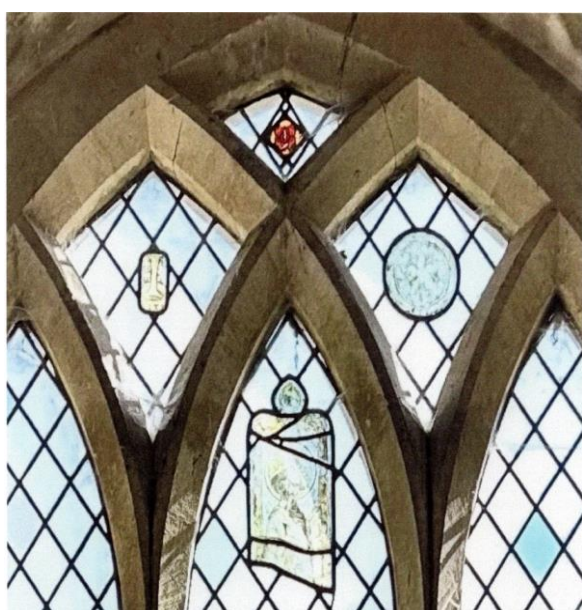
dread adjoining parishes where there are large building schemes to promote housing. At present there are no such plans for the Parish. Although the Parish would oppose development we accept that any such plan would embrace the present Church and will hopefully enlarge the congregation of the Parish.

The Vicarage

The vicarage is a four bedroom house maintained by the Diocese and sits on the South Downs at Burpham. It has good sized sitting and dining rooms, and a study and large kitchen. The house was built in the 1930s and has been well maintained and upgraded by the Diocese. The garden is laid mainly to lawn. with views down the Arun valley. There is good parking.

Conclusion

The Parish looks forward to welcoming its new Priest after more than 2 years of interregnum during which we have been served by assistance from retired priests.



Medieval window



The Chancel

St Nicholas church is welcoming and inclusive. We follow the House of Bishops guidance and policies on safeguarding and have completed SQP level 1.