

Lingfield Parish Profile

The village of Lingfield



Lingfield is a large village – population 5000 – lying in the south eastern corner of Surrey in an attractive, semi-rural location. The High Street provides a bustling village centre with a busy pharmacist, post office, two newsagents, a dry cleaners and three small supermarkets. Nearby, the Old

Town provides a scenic setting for the Parish Church – a beautiful mediaeval building – which is at the heart of the local community.

The vast majority of residents are white British. There is overwhelming support for the presence and work of the Church in the community – the ties that bind people to their Parish Church are strong in Lingfield, regardless of frequency of attendance.

There is a high proportion of owner-occupied housing, with a recent increase in social housing. The parish is predominantly middle-class, but closer inspection reveals that there is also deprivation in Lingfield. New developments have attracted many young families, some of them on low incomes, into the village. 7.6 per cent of children at Lingfield Primary School are entitled to free school meals and some families now come to Lingfield Messy Church in part to ensure that they have a hot meal. There is also anecdotal evidence of people walking to the food bank at East Grinstead, some six miles away. 20 per cent of working age people in Lingfield have no qualifications, which puts the parish in the bottom half of diocesan deprivation for this factor, despite its leafy setting.

Lingfield has good transport links to Croydon and London and many commute to work in the professions, for example in financial services, marketing, IT, executive and administrative roles. Others drive to Gatwick Airport, a major employment hub, or work at the large charity for young people severely affected by epilepsy, called Young Epilepsy – sited just outside the village.

The church and the village

The PCC has developed a Mission Action Plan, which was revised in 2019, with three key areas: Worship, Pastoral and Communications. Actions planned include exploring a Cafe church, a new service 'Breathe' will start in



Lent 2020. Training for a pastoral visiting team jointly with St. John's Dormansland is also planned for 2020. A new website has now been established with social media links. There are strong links between the church and the key organisations in the area. There is a close working relationship with Lingfield Primary School. The clergy take regular assemblies and go in during the school

day, as well as school pupils coming for tours of the church and regularly attending Messy Church. The church also has a good relationship with Lingfield Prep/ College, again with regular visits to the school.

There are close links between the church and Orchard Court Nursing Home. Clergy and authorised lay people take Communion to its residents and there are warm relationships between church members and the staff. Similar links have been made with Charters Village, a housing complex for seniors and its linked care home, Charters Court.

Residents from Cavendish House, a residential home for adults with learning disabilities, help with Messy Church and one resident is a member of the serving team.

The relationship with Young Epilepsy is close, with residents coming to the church regularly on Friday mornings to do some light dusting as part of their Duke of Edinburgh award.

The Lingfield Community Centre in the middle of the village, is home to Lingfield and Dormansland Meals on Wheels – a volunteer-run organisation

in which many church members are involved. It provides fresh, home cooked meals, on four days of the week, to local elderly people. Every third Sunday of the month the Centre plays host to a Sunday lunch for those in the local community who would otherwise be on their own. The initiative has been set up and continues to be run by Lingfield Parish Church, and the clergy are regular visitors.

Church carol singing has encouraged relationships with the local pubs, and there is a particularly warm relationship between the Parish Church and The Star (which are over the road from each other).

Overall, there is a great deal of goodwill in the village towards the church, whether people attend or not. This is symbolised by the high level of support for the annual Church Fete and also social events organised by the Friends of the Church, especially the annual open gardens event.



The church

Lingfield Parish Church is a beautiful, historic 15th century building, known variously as the 'Little Cathedral' and the 'Westminster Abbey' of Surrey. It has appeared on a BBC 4 documentary, and several other programmes



over the years, and receives a regular stream of visitors interested in its history, its architecture, its tombs and its brasses. It is also the spiritual hub of the village; the church is open every day during daylight hours, and many people drop in to pray and enjoy its tranquillity.

The Miller Room at the back of the church (a large room with kitchen facilities and WCs) is well used with a weekly coffee pop-in as well as for other church groups and meetings.



The church is in the Modern Catholic tradition. Eucharistic vestments are worn, and the Sacrament is reserved. Incense is used for major festivals. There are robed servers and a singing group (not robed).

The Electoral Roll is 128

The pattern of Sunday worship is: 8am CW Order One Said Eucharist (Morning Prayer led by a lay minister once a month) ; 9.30am CW Order One Sung Eucharist, with an All Age Eucharist on the first Sunday of the month (moved

as necessary to accommodate particular occasions such as Mothering Sunday). Lingfield also has occasional Evensongs. The church has a Sunday school, run by a team of lay leaders.

Weekday services: there is a mid-week said Eucharist with a small but loyal congregation and refreshments after the service. Messy Church, run every month, has become the biggest for miles around – regularly attracting 30-40 children and their parents and carers.

Pattern of daily offices: Morning Prayer is said in church on Tuesday and Friday mornings. Occasional offices, approximate numbers per annum of: Weddings – 7; Funerals – 29; Baptisms – 15.

In terms of staff, Lingfield has one SPA, a parish administrator who works two days a week and an organist. Lingfield has many committed and active lay people who contribute to Sunday worship and to the day-to-day life of the church. Through them, the links between church and community are strong and growing all the time.



There are well-established house groups in Lingfield and Dormansland (one of which is ecumenical). Alpha has been successfully run in the past. There are plenty of organisations those who wish to be active can join – church singing group, Mothers’ Union, flower arrangers, Sunday School, Messy Church, Friends of St Peter and St Paul, bell ringers, Lower Churchyard working party and the Guild of St Raphael (prayer and healing).

The PCC is fortunate in having good financial reserves which help to smooth the challenges of maintaining a grade 1 listed church. Grants from the Friends of the Church have helped with exceptional buildings and fabric projects. Income from planned giving decreased last year following the loss through death and moving away of some generous givers. The PCC is taking action to try to increase the level of giving.

There are friendly relationships with Dormansland Baptist Church and St Bernard's Roman Catholic Church in Lingfield. 'Churches Together' services are held about every six weeks.

The future

There are a few teenagers who participate in services as servers, reading the Gospel at All Age services etc. Sunday School takes place in the Miller Room each Sunday (apart from All Age worship). It is hoped this can increase with the introduction of other youth activities.

Lingfield church has a well equipped office with a very efficient administrator. This is proving to be a huge asset for the mission of the church. The church is currently improving its communications – an email distribution list has been set up,



including all baptism families (who are regularly invited back for services) and the website has been redesigned and relaunched. A new audio and visual system has recently been installed, giving potential for greater variety during worship and meetings.

Since the united benefice of Lingfield and Dormansland was set up, good collaboration between the two congregations has developed. The Vicar and the Dormansland Associate Vicar exchange places once a month. Occasional joint services have also been held e.g. Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Ascension Day, Corpus Christi.

The Vicarage is a modern four bedroom house within walking distance from the church. It has been built to meet the standards expected for Incumbents.,



www.lingfieldparishchurch.org