

THE ARROWVALE GROUP OF PARISHES



St Mary's, Byton - St Michael & All Angels, Lyonshall - St Mary's at Moorcourt - St Mary's, Pembridge
St John the Evangelist, Shobdon - St Peter's, Staunton on Arrow

www.arrowvalechurches.org.uk





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Mission and Ministry

The Churches of the Arrowvale Group of Parishes are at the very heart of the communities we serve. We value greatly the heritage of our buildings and the Christian worship which has been held in them over many centuries, but are constantly seeking ways to make that heritage more accessible and welcoming to friends and neighbours who have little or no Christian experience of their own.

We recognise that Mission is the work of both clergy and laity and look forward to our new Rector leading, guiding and inspiring us to reach out to all those around us.

The picturesque villages and beautiful countryside in which our church buildings are set means that we have many opportunities to minister to tourists and holidaymakers. Most of our buildings are open to visitors during the daytime and our visitor's books bear witness to how much people value the opportunity to spend time in quiet prayer or just enjoy the architecture. Guide books and information points are a feature of each of the buildings with Christian literature being available in all. In addition, some of our annual events, such as church summer fetes and cream teas, are keenly supported by both visitors and local parishioners.

Throughout the year some of our more suitable buildings are made available to the community for arts events, especially a wide variety of musical concerts, but also dramatic and visual art presentations.

Whilst not all of these are directly spiritual in nature, we believe that it is good that human creativity, which is inspired by our Creator God, should be celebrated in God's House, and that these activities enrich the life of our communities as a whole.

For many years we have distributed The Arrowvale Messenger, our well-produced bi-monthly Magazine, free of charge, to as many homes as possible across the Group. This puts details of services and directly Christian material - such as the Rector's Letter - into the hands of both church and non-church folk, as well as keeping everyone up to date with forthcoming events and news of Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals. The Messenger is now well supported by advertisers and all costs are covered and financial reserves are being created to secure future publication. Distribution is carried out by volunteers in each parish to over 1600 homes in the five parishes.

We have a tradition of an open baptismal policy, a desire to welcome couples asking for a church wedding wherever possible and a sensitive approach to all who need our help at times of bereavement.

Our most important area of local mission has been to our schools and the children of our villages. Much of this work has directly involved our clergy over the years - with the Rector taking school assemblies and guiding school visits to the churches - but we recognise that this is something that can be shared by clergy and laity.



We believe it is of the utmost importance for members of our churches to be closely involved in other organizations, events and charities in the community and seek to encourage this.

Whilst fundraising tends to make disproportionate demands on our time, we do find that enjoyable, imaginative and creative fundraising events can bring many people, who would not usually come to worship, over the threshold of our churches and demonstrate that Christians are quite normal! Such events, as well as raising much needed funds, help to build up a stronger support base among friends and neighbours which, we hope, will lead on to attendance at church and to helping people in their own spiritual journey. The traditional parish share system is in the process of being changed to a parish offer system from 2017, bringing its own challenges in the transitional period.

Finally, on a wider front, we continue to support the Deanery initiative to help train clergy at St Mark's Theological College in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and give regularly to overseas aid, development and mission charities.



St Mary's, Byton



Our church at Byton along with our village hall which we share with our sister parish is the social and spiritual hub of our community. The village consists of 25-30 households and there are 14 on the electoral roll. The church is well supported by a forward looking and vibrant PCC of nine. Congregations range from 10-20 people but our special services such as Harvest Festival and the Christmas carol service tend to attract larger congregations, mainly from the community at large who are not necessarily regular churchgoers. Normal services are monthly with additional services for festivals. On Good Friday we have a service where we carry the cross to the top of the hill behind the church, pausing at various points along the way for a reading and to sing a verse of a hymn. On Ascension Day we have a short service when we bring the cross back down the hill.

Although our church building is relevant to our general worship we also on occasions hold services in other buildings. For example in January when it is cold we hold our service in the warm farmhouse of one of our churchwardens and in September when the potato harvest is being gathered in we hold a special 'Potato Sunday' service in one of the potato sheds at the farm.

Our church building is always open and our visitor's book tells us that we have visitors from all over the world, which is amazing given our rural location. We are also situated on the Mortimer walking trail which starts in Ludlow and ends in Kington and our building is regularly visited by walkers.

We have a number of fundraising activities throughout the year in order to raise money for our Parish Share and the upkeep of our churchyard and building. This also encourages help and participation from the wider community. Our previous incumbent was very proactive with children and ran a very successful 'messy church' which in turn encouraged children to come to regular services. We hope to build on this in the future.

St Mary's, Byton is one of the least known churches, but historically one of the most interesting, a reflection of local and national events. People have worshipped here for 1300 years, near the Iron Age settlement on Wapley Hill and overlooking the Lugg Valley into Wales.

The border was always an unsettled area of murderous raiding. "Boctune" the early word for Byton was held in 1066 on behalf of the King by the Norman, Osbern fitz Richard. The Saxon Church was rebuilt by the Normans (windows and door arch are shown on a sketch dated 1850). Raids by Welsh Princes destroyed Byton's Churches in 1262 and 1402, but they were rebuilt, and the manor prospered in spite of the Black Death. The 15th Century Church survived until a fire in 1857.

The subsequent Victorian replacement incorporated a few traces of earlier churches, though the font and the tympanum on the south wall date from the 11th Century and the tombs in the nave from the 17th. The clock is a memorial to those killed in the Great War.



The church is in good condition having had a new roof fairly recently. The organ is unique and has to be pumped by hand and together with the oil lamps creates a wonderful atmosphere.

From the churchyard there are breathtaking views over the Lugg Valley in the foreground and Radnor Forest in the background. The most notable grave in our churchyard is that of Sir John Stanhope Arkwright, late of Kinsham Court and Hampton Court, who was the writer of the poem which became the remembrance hymn 'O Valiant Hearts'. We have a band of volunteers organised by the churchwardens who keep the churchyard well maintained throughout the year.





St Michael & All Angels, Lyonshall

About Us

We enjoy 3 regular services each month, Holy Communion, Common Worship, on the 3rd Sunday is at 9.30am, Morning Prayer is at 11am on the first Sunday and Evening Prayer is on the 4th Sunday at 6pm. In addition to the Festival Services we hold an annual Crib and Christingle Service which attracts a parents and children from the village and throughout the Group.

The majority of the present regular congregation prefers traditional services and uses them whenever possible, although modern services are used as appropriate especially when younger people are involved.

Numerous fund raising events are held each year, mostly aimed at involving the wider community as well as the core congregation. As examples, there is an annual Lunch, with speaker, attended by 100 or so people, auction of promises often included with harvest lunch, a 200 ticket draw and later this year an Antiques Road Show. Our major event, run jointly with Titley Parish, Santa Special at Titley Junction Station, which regularly attracted 7/800 adults and children was cancelled last year through the ill health of the owners but it is hoped this will be able to be continued at some time in the future.

Our concerns mostly centre around the constant necessity for fundraising and also what can be done to encourage the younger generation and their families to participate in Church life.

We wish to see a widening involvement of those who can serve the Church. Apart from the PCC, there are few formal groups, although the Church is well served by those who:-

Keep the Church open 365 days each year - Clean and care for the Church and its fabric – Maintain and care for the Churchyard and Church surrounds – Support the Church through planned giving and donations – Ring the Bells – Prepare for and take Services – Play the Organ – Arrange the flowers – Deliver the magazine - and support the Friends of Lyonshall Church draw.

Our Parish historian has undertaken detailed research into the background and lives of the War Dead from the Parish which is available for all to read on visiting the Church. A bell is tolled on the 100th anniversary of each death.

There is a lot of goodwill for the Church in Lyonshall which is instanced by the way people help not just on a regular basis but also at times of particular need and by people who are not necessarily regular Churchgoers.

Throughout the late Autumn and Winter the Church is floodlit each weekend much to the reported joy of travellers and villagers alike.

We have an established PCC with 12 members including 2 Churchwardens and all other posts filled. The resources we have are



targeted as necessity dictates, namely, in keeping the Church open for prayer and worship and in meeting our financial obligations. Regrettably, there is little leeway for anything else.

About the Parish

St Michael & All Angels, Lyonshall is situated on a commanding rise overlooking the village to the south and it sits alongside the ruins of the moated Lyonshall Castle.

The first church sited here was probably established to serve the castle and it has been substantially rebuilt and extended since its earliest days in the 11th Century. The present building dates mainly from the 13th Century but its appearance today owes much to a substantial renovation carried out in 1872/3. After a major project in 2013/14 when the Tower and North Transept were fully re-roofed, the building is in a good state of repair and is considered to be the warmest in the area. The bells were restored in 2013. The churchyard is spacious and regularly strimmed and mowed.

The Parish population is about 600 adults and 150 children and we have 49 on the Electoral Roll. The Parish, which is said to have the largest in area of all the Parishes in the Diocese, is not compact and consists of a village centre and several hamlets as well as numerous farms. The Memorial Hall which accommodates around 100 is run by a separate charity unconnected with the Church.

Village activities not run by the Church but involving church folk include weekly Mums and Tot's, Upholstery mornings, Bridge Club, Tai Chi and a monthly charity coffee morning. The Parish Council regularly arranges social evenings, including a 'pop up pub' whilst the village pub is being substantially refurbished, and supervises the children's playground which is run by a volunteer committee.

A full profile of the village is on the website www.lyonshall.net







St Mary the Virgin Church, Pembridge With St Mary's Moorcourt

St Mary the Virgin, Pembridge, together with St Mary's, Moorcourt, serves a village and its surrounding area of approximately 1000 parishioners.

On entry to our church you are immediately overwhelmed by the feeling of peace and tranquility within the building, frequently referred to by the numerous comments in our visitors' book. It is open daily for private prayer and meditation.

Services are held weekly at 11.00am and consist either of sung Holy Communion, Family Communion or Family Service, except on the second Sunday where we come together for a more informal service of prayer and fellowship led by our Lay Reader or by laity. Coffee and croissants are shared together with an opportunity for discussion of current affairs or other topics.

The Pembridge Tapestries is an example of where the church has engaged with the local community. This project brought together a diverse group of people of all ages and from all walks of life. An array of talents was unearthed to produce the now celebrated Pembridge – Past to Present tapestry exhibition, recording the diverse history of our unique village from Doomsday to the present century. These tapestries are now on permanent display in the church and attract people from far and wide, which subsequently supports local businesses. The children from our village school also became

involved in the tapestries, producing a set of their own which will be on display in church in the near future. The project's original aim was to bring together people who were on the outside of the 'church family'. This aim was more than achieved resulting in numerous lasting friendships and the continuation of the group, meeting on a regular basis.

Messy Church, started three years ago, has proved an overwhelming success. Held monthly in the village hall, it has brought together children and their families from across the Benefice for fun, food and fellowship.

St Mary's Pembridge is a large imposing stone building (listed Grade 1) in good repair, which is built around the original foundations of a Norman Church. The present church was built in about 1330. It consists of a large nave, north and south transepts, large chancel and sanctuary (within which stands a high altar) and a Lady Chapel used for smaller services and by the members of the Mothers Union. Because of its size, the church is expensive to run but the congregation is warm and welcoming. The church is enhanced by beautiful stained glass windows and walls decorated by 17th century mural writings. The church, set in a prominent position, looks down on a large village with an array of houses from early 13th century to modern day. It is surrounded on the south and west side with lawns frequently used for village events.



The unique detached octagonal bell tower, housing 5 bells, is under the jurisdiction of the Pembridge Amenity Trust. The bells are rung regularly by a local team of bell ringers and the tower is frequently used by visiting groups who wish to ring in this unique surrounding. Dendrology investigations have established the oak structure of this building to date from 1200. The tower is of such significance that it is listed in the highest category of national monuments to be preserved.

The church houses a renowned church organ, which is played at our Sunday services by accomplished musicians. It is also used regularly for teaching purposes. Music is enhanced by the amazing acoustics found within our building.

St Mary's Moorcourt lies three miles to the west of Pembridge and is a former estate "chapel of ease". This tin tabernacle accommodates up to 55 worshippers and is in regular use and much loved by the community, even though it lacks modern day amenities. A service of Holy Communion is held once a month attended by worshippers from all the parishes in the benefice. St Mary's Pembridge and St Mary's Moorcourt are governed by one PCC that has a full complement of members.

The congregations of both churches are quite mixed in age, with both a traditional and forward thinking outlook and covering a cross section of the community. Attendances in Pembridge can vary from

30 for a Sunday service, 150 at a festival and up to 220 for a large wedding or funeral. There are also regular prayer groups and study groups that meet within the parish and a dedicated band of bell ringers which ring throughout the benefice. Members of the congregations are also involved in the community as school governors, the School Ethos Group, Parish Council Members, Mothers Union members and members of the Arrowvale Choir.

At St Mary's Pembridge, we are now in the process of looking at a large remodelling project where we hope to celebrate and enhance the unique character of our church, taking it into the 21st Century and beyond. This project will include the provision of amenities such as a kitchen, toilets, improved lighting and heating, the development of a performance space and a heritage display. The project is well advanced and a second submission to the Heritage Lottery fund is to be made in August 2017. This is intended to further increase the use of this wonderful building to the wider community and to promote our unique local heritage.

The village is served by a V.A. Primary School, which has ongoing strong links with the church. It has a current roll of approximately 84 pupils. The school has recently been remodelled to a high standard and children attend from a wide area. The latest Ofsted Report stated that the school was "Outstanding in all Aspects" including the SIAMS. A preschool group with links to the school operates from the village hall.



The village of Pembridge itself, which is located on the River Arrow, has a village shop/tearoom, a farm shop, two public houses, a gallery, a well-used village hall, a restaurant and a café. It is situated on the main A44 between the market towns of Leominster and Kington, which are approximately 7 miles away. The Cathedral City of Hereford is 15 miles away. The village comprises a wealth of Black and White medieval houses surrounding an old coaching inn and unique market place.

Active within the village is a range of clubs and associations such as W.I., Mother's Union, The Farmer's Group and the Pride in Pembridge Group, who keep our village looking immaculate, recently winning a Gold National award. There are weekly whist drives, keep fit classes, a weekly auction and an Annual Horticultural Society Show. Within and surrounding the village are opportunities for walking, cycling, fishing and a central recreational area. Tourists are well served with two campsites and holiday accommodation locally. The Pembridge Good Neighbours' Scheme, run by members of the community aiding the elderly, lonely and people with a variety of needs is also supported by members of the church with 'coffee, cake and chat mornings' in the village hall.

The Pembridge Amenity Trust was formed to safeguard the past, present and future of our unique village.





Positive aspects relating to our village are a low crime rate, beautiful surroundings, a valued quality of life, excellent C of E Village School.

Points of concern within our village is an ageing population, lack of affordable housing for young people, lack of employment, limited Post Office services and the loss of our local doctors surgery. Traffic and road safety are becoming an increasing problem.

Points of concern within our church is the lack of adequate heating, the ongoing pressure of fund raising, leading to a lack of available time to concentrate on mission and an aging congregation.

We have a lively and hardworking PCC, exuding Team Spirit, who work together to enable the church building to be available

to all. The annual Church Fete, held on the lawns of the church is keenly supported. The annual Harvest Supper, Cream Teas served throughout the summer months, quiz evenings in the village hall, are all events that are part of the village calendar and looked forward to by all. Music and performance in church also form an important part in encouraging the community to engage with the church. Although these events are to raise much-needed funds to run the church, they form an important social need in encouraging the community to come together. The church is also a drop off point for the congregation to donate items for the local food banks.

A group of volunteers, not all worshipping members, keep the church and churchyard presentable with a rota of flower arrangers enhancing the beauty of the church.

We enjoy a good relationship with our local Methodist chapel





Pembridge CE Primary School

Pembridge CE Primary School (<http://www.pembridge.hereford.sch.uk/>) is a thriving and lively school with 85 children on the roll. It is a vital point of contact between the church and the younger section of the Pembridge community. The school has a strong partnership with the church. The school under its Head Teacher Mr Rob Hollis greatly values this link and wishes to encourage it.

In the past the partnership has relied heavily on the incumbent in person. Specific activities have included:

- * Leading special services in church - eg Christmas, Easter, Ash Wednesday, Year 6 Leavers Service.
- * Having creative input into and attending other special occasions at school such as Candlemas or Ascension Day.
- * Planning creative experiences for the children eg Experience Easter.
- * Leading regular worship in school.
- * Spending time in school to support curriculum areas, especially RE - eg mock baptism, Bible studies, confirmation classes, tours of the church building.
- * being a committed and involved school Governor.

The school has stated explicitly that it wants to strengthen the existing links. It also wants to extend the partnership. The

Head Teacher looks to the incumbent to suggest creative ways of bringing the everyday life of church and school closer together – for example, through some shared prayers.

The school has great strategic importance in the mission of the church to the community. The new incumbent is invited to work with both church and school in order to make the most of this extraordinary opportunity. The incumbent will need to develop a mission strategy which both makes the most of his/her personal gifts, and also finds ways of involving more church members in the partnership.





St John the Evangelist, Shobdon

Shobdon Church is unique, built by the Bateman family who lived at Shobdon Court, and consecrated in the 1750's. It is the subject of much architectural interest being built in the style of Strawberry Hill Gothic. There are a large number of visitors who contribute to our income, and the PCC is working on its ministry to them through prayer and information leaflets.

We currently hold three services a month in church. We have strong links to the Methodists and hold a United Service every two months. The Arrowvale Choir joins us every other month for Evensong. There is also a weekday communion service held in the Methodist Chapel in the village. A bible study group meets once a month, and groupwide Lenten and Advent bible studies are held. Due to its very special interior, Shobdon Church is very popular with wedding couples.

We have a very good relationship with the Primary School. The children come up to Church four times a year for Harvest, Carol, Mothering Day and Leavers' Services. An afterschool club, Spotlight, takes place every week run by the Baptist Church but with PCC members helping. Children from Shobdon go to Messy Church each month in Pembridge, again where PCC members help.

Shobdon has a council estate, and three other estates providing mixed housing within the boundaries, leading to mixed demographics.

The population is approximately 850. The Primary School with 85 children is recognised as being very good, with excellent Ofsted results. There is also a thriving Pre-School Group.

There are good employment opportunities: an industrial site at the Airfield; the Cargill Hatchery near the church; farming and many other small businesses.

An excellent Post Office and Stores serves the community, the owners being very helpful and generous in supporting village events. There is also a busy Public House and a Leisure Park with static mobile homes and touring caravans, which bring in more visitors. The Airfield creates much interest for private flights, both helicopters and fixed wing, and gliding instruction. Other clubs include Football, Indoor Carpet Bowls, Dancing and Angling.

A Food and Flying Festival is held every year at the Airfield bringing thousands of visitors to the village and the Church holds a Flower Festival every other year.

Many of our congregation are involved with these events, and are also represented on the Parish Council and Village Hall Committee as well as with other charities.



Top:
Visit from the Kremlin Museum led by The General Director, Dr Elena Gagarina (daughter of cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin) and 11 members of the senior management team.

Bottom right:
The "Strawberry Hill Gothic" interior of Shobdon Church

Bottom left:
HRH Prince Charles receives a commemorative picture following his visit in 2014..





St Peter's, Staunton on Arrow

Mission

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is dedicated to promoting the whole mission of the Church in this parish: pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our church and to become a part of our parish Christian community.

Methods

- St. Peter's Church is never locked and always open for visitors.
- The North Transept is a dedicated children's area enabling families with young children to easily join in our worship.
- The South Transept is being developed as a Visitor's Area to provide displays showing items of local interest and publications from the benefice and diocese.
- The main body of the church is being progressively refurbished, thanks to a recent bequest, with the aim of providing a brighter, warmer and more welcoming environment for the celebration of joint worship.
- Two services are held each month, except in August. These are Evensong on the first Sunday of the month and Holy Communion on the second Sunday. In 2015 this meant a total of 28. There were also 1 funeral, 1 baptism and 2 weddings.
- Café Church has been held, in winter months, in the nearby village hall. This is a modern and relaxed service with café style seating and tables. The service is planned as an ecumenical outreach and includes hymns, songs, prayers, a reading and rector's address on a particular

theme, followed by discussion and refreshments.

- A crib service is held each year to coincide with the visit to the village of Santa Claus – courtesy of the local "Lions" club.
- Other events run by the PCC include a Pancake Fest for Shrove Tuesday and a Christmas Fayre in December.
- The PCC also collaborates with other village groups (Woman's Institute and Village Hall Committee) in organising an Annual Village Fete, or Barbecue, and Carol Singing.
- There is a strong tradition in the village of caring for each other. This embraces both PCC and those who do not attend church regularly. Those who are sick are visited, at home or in care and the previous incumbent visited those who were unable to attend church, due to age or infirmity, to celebrate communion with them at their home or in hospital.

RESOURCES

- There are currently 44 persons on the Electoral Roll, of whom some 12 are regular members of the congregation.
 - This equates fairly precisely with the membership of the PCC which currently numbers 12.
 - There is considerable goodwill within the village towards the church - as a building, institution, and a place for christenings, marriages and funerals.
 - This provides significant voluntary effort to keeping the churchyard well managed. Most of those persons who do this are not churchgoers.
 - This goodwill also means that fund-raising events on behalf of the church are usually well supported.
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- The esteem in which St. Peter's is held is shown by recent bequests to the church which have enabled the PCC to fund expensive repair work to the South Transept window and chancel windows as well as the refurbishment noted above.

Challenges

- The parish comprises some 83 households: a population of about 140. Of these 83 dwellings people living in 12 of these attend church on a regular or occasional basis – some 16 persons.
- The failure to reach out to some 89% of the population, living in 86% of the households in the parish is of grave concern to the PCC.
- Part of the reason for this is geographical: The parish is large and includes the hamlets of Horseway Head and Staunton Green (both about a mile away from St. Peter's) and Stansbatch (some – 2 miles away from St. Peter's) stretching in all to within a few miles of Presteigne. Around Highland Farm there are 5 dwellings $2\frac{3}{4}$ to 3 miles away from St. Peter's. Other dwellings along the Kington to Presteigne road (but still defined as part of our parish) are between $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 miles from St. Peter's. It is interesting to note that these latter dwellings are 2 to $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from St. Andrew's at Presteigne.
- In addition to the above geographical challenge there are 17 dwellings that are between $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from St. Peter's but have been deemed to be in Pembridge which is between 2 and 3 miles away. These households represent some 46% of the dwellings in the central village clustered around St. Peter's.

- The café church initiative began well with attendance from chapelgoers. Sadly this tapered off until attendance was only the regulars at the normal services. Perhaps another ecumenical initiative needs to be considered?
- Meeting the demands of our Parish Share (successfully) has been a constant concern as this has amounted to some £45 p.a. for each head of total population of the parish. This is far higher than that for larger parishes in the benefice.

The Church

The village is recorded on the Domesday Book and there is a Norman Motte in good condition immediately to the West of the church. The list of vicars runs from 1297 to today. The original modest building was replaced in 1856 by the present gothic-revival church designed in an Early-English to Decorated transition style with both Plate Tracery and Flowing Tracery. The nave is aisleless originally with chapels in both transepts. Whilst not very large it has a most imposing appearance due to both its location and the architect's obvious intention to impress. The tower of 6 bells, cast in 1854, attracts visiting bell-ringers due to quality of the bells and their good condition. The congregation in normal times is around a dozen, but we are well attended at festivals and for weddings and funerals. The Church is always open and is supported by committed volunteers who care for both the building and churchyard.



Funds

With Parish Share representing some 2/3 of the annual budget, active fund-raising forms a vital part of annual income. Regular giving, covenants and donations provide the remaining 35%. Our Parish Share has been met in full and on time. Significant help has also been given to Byton to assist them in meeting their Parish Share.

The Village

The parish is large and includes the hamlets of Horseway Head, Staunton Green and Stansbatch, stretching in all to within a few miles of Presteigne. Near the Church is the modern Village Hall which is well used by both Church and village. There are several buildings of interest in and near the main village. Pevsner lists in The Buildings of England Old Hall, Old School House, Court of Noke (actually a few yards inside Pembridge), Highland Farm and Upper Nash Farm. The village is also unusual in having its own private water company supplying some 40+ dwellings with local water.

The People

Many residents work in farming and allied trades. There is also a haulage firm, a very popular auto repair business, a self-catering and bed & breakfast business and a plant nursery. There are a large number of retired persons and relatively few young persons and children. The most noteworthy quality of the village is its friendly and welcoming nature. Organised events are supported by all,

churchgoing or not. The major challenge for the PCC is to convert this goodwill into a more active Christian fellowship.

Landscape

The lovely river Arrow flows tranquilly through the parish. The water is pure and supports varied wildlife. The iron-age hill fort at Wapley and surrounding plantations are used for game shooting in season. Herds of fallow deer occupy the woodlands and the Radnor and West Hereford Hunt visits the village once or twice a year. Rambling clubs find the village a popular centre. All in all, the landscape presents the essence of Rural England in most people's imagination.



Arrowvale Group of Parishes Statement of Need

The Arrowvale Group of Parishes is situated in the County of Herefordshire, but is right on the Border with Wales. It is part of the Diocese of Hereford and the Kington and Weobley Deanery. The Group covers roughly 30 square miles, has a total population of about 3000 souls, and is set in unspoilt, some would say, idyllic, English countryside. The area is still fairly traditional in outlook and character, with largely agricultural surroundings and a continuing regard for “hunting, shooting and fishing” as an integral part of rural life. The population, as might be expected, is a fair cross-section of society, but, as is the case across Herefordshire, the average age of residents is increasing. Sources of employment are in agriculture, associated support industries, together with light industry and professional occupations. Around the benefice you will find a wide range of housing - many fine manor houses and farms, hundreds of black and white cottages, and a number of Housing Association properties and some small scale new build developments.

Arrowvale consists of five parishes with six churches, and has been a United Benefice since 1999 when the parish of Lyonshall joined the Group as part of Deanery-wide pastoral reorganizations. No further reorganization of parish boundaries is envisaged or anticipated. There are five benefices in the Deanery and the Clergy and Readers, as well as laity, work well as a collaborative and supportive team.

The Arrowvale churches are led, in terms of licensed ministers, by the Incumbent and a Reader, who are assisted on occasion by a resident retired priest. Retired clergy from elsewhere in the Deanery can, sometimes via the Rural Dean, be called upon for help when

needed, and, importantly, a number of Sunday services are regularly lead by the laity. Worship style can generally be described as central-Anglican but there is a healthy mixture of ancient and modern liturgy, old and new music, and Eucharistic and non-Eucharistic services, which, we hope, provides something for everyone. The congregations enjoy a fairly traditional approach to preaching and to the Scriptures, but are not afraid to experience new insights and ideas. Friendships with other churches have been historically very warm, and there are good ties with the Methodist chapels in Shobdon and Pembridge. Although the Group’s six churches are fairly diverse in some ways, the congregations work very happily together and support each other in joint events. On “Fifth Sundays,” members from all the churches are given the opportunity to meet together for the Group Service, which moves around the Benefice, and some Festivals are celebrated together rather than as individual fellowships. The church buildings are generally in good order, with Shobdon having full restoration completed in 2012 and Lyonshall having major renewal of the tower roof in 2013. Whilst Pembridge is in the process of major reordering, none of the churches in the Benefice have modern facilities of toilets and kitchens.

The Rectory is situated on a quiet lane on the edge of Pembridge village. It was built in the mid-sixties, and is a fairly spacious five-bedroom house, warm and comfortable, with a moderately sized private garden. There are two first-class primary schools - a Church Aided School in Pembridge and a Community School in Shobdon - and a fine choice of Secondary Schools in the area - Kington, Weobley and Presteigne being the nearest. Kington and Leominster are seven



miles from Pembridge in opposite directions and are both well served with shops and some banking facilities. For larger shops, Hereford is very good. Medical service is provided by the Kington Medical Practice. The General Hospital is in Hereford, but there are minor injuries units in Kington and Leominster also. There is an excellent new NHS Dental Centre in Leominster. Lyonshall and Pembridge are well serviced by bus services. The nearest train station is in Leominster and it takes approximately an hour to reach the nearest motorway - which many of us consider a plus point! There is a small private airfield in the valley between Pembridge and Shobdon, so there is some light aircraft noise at times - on the other hand, any clergy with a helicopter, or who enjoy watching small planes and gliders, might see this as another plus point!



The Rectory



School Christmas service in Pembridge

Appendices

Financial Statement

All Parishes are under financial strain but up to and including 2015 have been able to pay 100% of the Parish Share as well as the annual running cost of each Church. Over the past couple of years it has been clear that the distribution of the Group share amongst the 5 Parishes had become unfair. The matter is currently under active discussion and has been resolved, in spite of many difficulties, for 2016 amongst the Group but a permanent solution is still to be finalised. The change from Parish Share to Parish Offer has created an opportunity to address this imbalance although planned commitments for 2017 are currently looking somewhat daunting.”

Parish Profile	Population	Electoral Roll	PCC members	Churchyard Open	Congregation Exceed 20	Prayer book or Modern	Change ringing	Choir	Adequate heating	Disabled Access
Byton	90	14	9	Yes	No	Modern	No	No	No	No
Lyonshall	760	49	12	Yes	No	Both	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Pembridge	930	55	11	Yes	Yes	Modern	Yes	Yes	No	on request
Moorcourt				No	No	P B	No	No	Yes	No
Shobdon	860	32	8	Yes	No	Both	?	Yes	Yes	Yes
Staunton	230	46	12	Yes	No	Both	Yes	No	No	Yes



None of the churches within the Arrowvale Group of Parishes have modern kitchen or toilet facilities on site

Adequate parking is available at all churches but is not purpose built.

Service Pattern	1st Sunday	Time	2nd Sunday	Time	3 rd Sunday	Time	4 th Sunday	Time
Byton	Holy Communion	9.30am						
Lyonshall	Morning Prayer	11.00am			Holy Communion	9.30am	Evening Prayer	6.00pm
Pembridge	Family Communion	11.00am	Coffee & Croissants	11.00am	Holy Communion	11.00am	Family Service	11.00am
Moorcourt			Holy Communion	8.00am				
Shobdon			Morning Prayer	11.00am	Evening Prayer	6.00pm	Holy Communion	9.30am
Staunton	Evening Prayer	6.00pm	Holy Communion	11.00am				



Statistics 2016	Weddings	Baptisms	Funerals or Burial of Ashes
Byton		1	1
Lyonshall	1	2	3
Pembridge	7	7	5
Moorcourt			
Shobdon	9	1	4
Staunton	2	1	1

Additional Information	School	Community Hall	Village Shop(s)	Public Transport
Byton				
Lyonshall		Yes		Yes
Pembridge	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Moorcourt				
Shobdon	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Staunton		Yes		



THE ARROWVALE GROUP OF PARISHES



St Mary's, Byton - St Michael & All Angels, Lyonshall - St Mary's at Moorcourt - St Mary's, Pembridge
St John the Evangelist, Shobdon - St Peter's, Staunton on Arrow

www.arrowvalechurches.org.uk