

All Saints Chilvers Coton with St Mary the Virgin Astley



**Priest in Charge All Saints,
Chilvers Coton and St Mary's, Astley
and Deanery Pioneer Minister**

Welcome from the Bishop

Thank you for taking the time to consider prayerfully whether this is the post for you! May God speak with you as you read this profile and listen to his voice.

The realisation of our diocesan vision to be 'bearers of life' through restored health, new growth and renewed relationships will only come about through the work of God's Spirit, in and through God's people in each local church community. It is heartening to see how, despite many difficulties and challenges that the Covid pandemic has left in its trail, that the church family in Chilvers Coton and Astley are looking to the future with hope, open to new possibilities for growth, whilst acknowledging the challenges they face.

This post offers exciting possibilities for a new colleague with particular sensitivities and gifts to build confidence for mission in the church, together with a passion and ability to pioneer some new things in the parish and across the deanery.

The parish is part of a dynamic, faithful, friendly and supportive deanery, with creative and gifted colleagues. We look forward to the ways in which the parish will make its own contribution to the wider life of the diocese as we seek to fulfil our mission purpose of Worshipping God, Making New Disciples and Transforming Communities.

With my prayers for you as you listen to God, reflect and pray.

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Bishop Ruth Worsley, Acting Bishop of Coventry



Welcome from the Area Dean

Thank you for taking the time to prayerfully consider whether this is the post for you! May God speak with you as you read this profile and listen to his voice.

There is a real opportunity for All Saints and St Mary's at this time to re-imagine mission and ministry through restored church health, renewed relationships and new growth demonstrating their trust and faith in God who is at work in them and their communities. I pray that this re-imagined post will reinvigorate the church families and enable new growth in the emerging new housing in the parishes and wider deanery.

A creative, missional, pioneering leader with a pastoral heart will find this wonderful community and its friendly, supportive deanery a great place to live and minister in.

Nuneaton Deanery has one of the largest populations in the Church of England. It is also one of the poorest areas of Coventry Diocese, with large areas of deprivation.

The Deanery Chapter has a mixture of stipendiary, self-supporting and retired clergy, from a wide range of traditions. We support each other by meeting for prayer and discussion, and sharing lunch together, taking turns to host our colleagues. We have an interesting mix of rural and suburban churches and we endeavour to support each other as much as we can.

A new initiative of the Diocese of Coventry has been to establish six Diocesan Mission Hub Churches. The Hubs seek to support and resource leaders and churches in the development of discipleship, growing leaders and planting new worshipping communities, with a particular focus on the regeneration of urban parishes. All Saints Bedworth is the nearest.

The deanery is strategically looking at opportunities for growth. We think that this parish has the potential for considerable growth and are excited about this appointment. We are praying as a deanery for a new priest to help this parish flourish by growing spiritually, numerically, and financially and are excited by the potential of the Deanery role which can cross parish boundaries.

The deanery has a great potential for mission and is fully committed to fulfilling the Diocesan Mission Purpose of Worshipping God, Making New Disciples and Transforming Communities. We pray that as you read the profile you may be inspired to be the priest to help these two very different churches to grow and to bring new life as you pioneer in the deanery. We look forward to welcoming you to Nuneaton Deanery!

With my prayers for you as you listen to God, reflect and pray.

Alison Evans, Assistant Area Dean



Mission Hub support for pioneering aspect of the role

As the Mission Hub serving Nuneaton deanery, we are really excited about the mission possibilities this new post offers. The Hub has a proven track record of supporting fresh expressions of church, a funded church plant and a church regeneration plant.

Our support to the new incumbent will be four-fold. Firstly, in providing expertise and training to the incumbent and to the congregation of All Saints with regard to pioneering new ministry. Secondly, in providing resources and people to help with the establishment of new worshipping communities on newer housing estates identified as having potential for missional growth. Thirdly, providing an expert to liaise with housing estate developers, local government and politicians to source funding and buildings that could be used for community purposes. Finally, with prayer. One of our Mission Hub Associates is regularly prayer walking the streets of the new housing estates, spiritually preparing the ground for the establishment of new worshipping communities. We look forward to working closely and strategically with the new incumbent in an area which is a key part of our deanery plan.

Introduction to this dual role and why we are excited about it

Interim Priest in Charge All Saints, Chilvers Coton and St Mary's, Astley/0.4 Deanery Pioneer Minister.

This is an interim post for 3 years (There is potential to extend by a further 3 years)

The interim minister will report will work in close partnership with the Archdeacon Missioner, Director of Healthy Churches and New Worshipping Communities and the Assistant Area Dean of Nuneaton.

We are looking and praying for an enthusiastic, energetic and passionate Pioneer Minister and Priest in Charge to lead our churches to engage with new housing and bring life to the existing parishes and their churches.

The Diocese of Coventry has an exciting growth strategy aiming to launch 150 new worshipping communities before the end of this decade and we believe that with two large new areas of housing within Coton parish, plus another 1000+ houses in the neighbouring parish of Attleborough there is a great opportunity to do a new work.

General

The general role of an Interim Minister is to supports the process of revitalising parishes as they adapt to changing circumstances and explore how best to respond in positive, realistic and fruitful ways. This role description notes the regulations and guidance around use of interim ministry and seeks to follow that guidance fully. See

<https://www.interiministry.org.uk/> for more information on Interim Ministry.

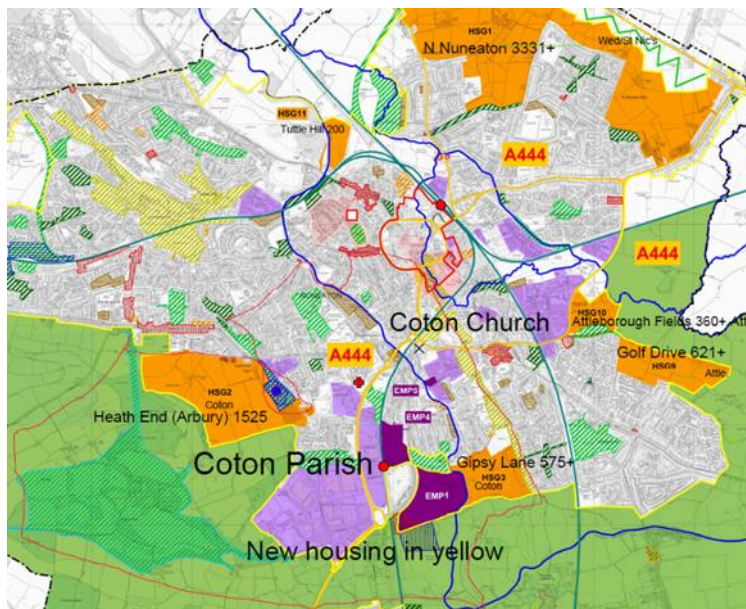
Some specific areas relating to the role are as follows:

1. To share with the Bishop of Coventry both in the cure of souls and in responsibility, under God, for growing of the kingdom in the parish.
2. To have regard to the calling and responsibilities of the clergy as described in the Canons, the Ordinal, the Code of Professional Conduct for the Clergy.
3. To ensure the highest possible standards in safeguarding.
4. To ensure that a good standard of worship, preaching and pastoral care is provided.
5. To further develop Lay and Self-Supporting ministry and leadership
6. To proclaim the gospel in word and deed as an agent of God’s purpose and love.
7. To work collaboratively and ecumenically within the Deanery and Diocese both in current mission and ministry and in the reshaping of ministry as resources and opportunities will require.
8. To prepare the parishes for the long-term leadership that will follow this interim period.
9. To attend the clergy training events, chapter meetings, Deanery synod and other appropriate meetings as necessary.

Deanery Pioneer Minister Role

Introduction, the context and the opportunity

Nuneaton is currently undergoing transformational building work with both the regeneration of the town centre and major housing developments around the edge of the town. Approximately 7500 new homes are either in the process of being built or due to be built in the next 5 years. As a deanery we spotted there is a huge missional imperative to proclaim the good news, bringing people to Christ and transforming community. It is likely that the focus of this role will be in the new housing within the parish of Coton or Attleborough, but there is also encouragement to work across parish boundaries within Nuneaton as a whole.



Nuneaton New Housing map

Main Duties and Responsibilities

Based in the new housing estate(s)

- Foster and nurture prayer for the area
- Identify the estate where a new Worshipping Community could be grown
- Begin to build relationships and a sense of community
- Communicate and share faith as relationships grow
- Harness the missional energy of the DMPC and Nuneaton churches
- Recruit and train a team (which can be drawn from churches across the deanery)
- This is a role for a creative, entrepreneurial candidate who isn't afraid of taking risks and learning from experiences, both positive and negative

Support

We realise that as a pioneer role this is a ministry which can both be inspiring and isolating so we want to support you

- Accountability and support for this role will be provided by the Assistant Area Dean (who is currently vicar of Holy Trinity Attleborough).
- The pioneer minister will be part of a group of ordained church planters in the deanery.
- The local resourcing Mission Hub based in Bedworth is committed to support with training, mentoring and providing specific expertise in areas such as worship and growing faith.

Outcomes for deanery pioneer post

Three key outcomes from this post are as follows;

1. An established worshipping Community on one of the housing estates in Nuneaton is formed.
2. A range of activities and events that engage regularly with the local community within one or more of the new housing areas has been started.
3. A team has been trained to continue and extend the work, including leading new worshipping community

Person Specification

- Ordained
- Gift of evangelism
- Entrepreneur, adventurer and pioneer
- Collaborative in ministry
- Able to encourage, train and equip lay people
- Deep and mature spirituality
- Good communication skills
- Ability to be comfortable amidst uncertainty and change
- Ability to develop a culture of perseverance in the team and worshipping communities

All Saints, Chilvers Coton



Churchwardens Welcome

Welcome to our Parish Profile for All Saints, Chilvers Coton. We are based in Nuneaton in one of the largest parishes in the deanery. Much of our parish lies within a deprived area and we feel strongly that we should be doing more to reach out to families and individuals. Due to the building of new housing within our parish we now find ourselves geographically on the edge rather than in the centre of our community. We would like to think that this will provide us with an opportunity for further outreach.

Margaret has been a churchwarden for many years and Colin is fairly new to the role. Although we have both been members of the church for many years, we feel very strongly that a time for change is needed to grow our congregation for the future.

Many of our services are traditional, however, our largest congregation is at Messy Church which we hold on a monthly basis in our Church Hall. We feel very strongly that this is an opportunity we need to build upon. Although we are a small congregation, we are a dedicated group who also enjoy the social life of the church which we would like to expand upon, as we enjoy fellowship, fun and laughter together.

We are very conscious that when we talk about the church we are talking about the congregation and not the building. We feel that, coming together as church, we know the presence of the living and loving God.

Are we the parish and opportunity that you are looking for, and are you the person to lead and guide us in pursuing our vision?

Margaret and Colin
Churchwardens

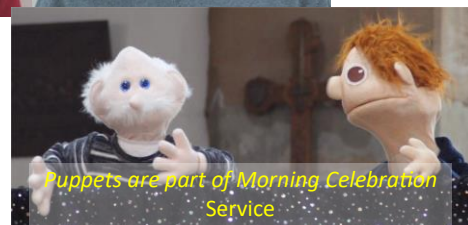


The Church's and Diocesan Vision

Worshipping God

Our heart: developing worship that helps the church to grow
We want to continue to develop our worship so it enables all to be involved and to experience God.

We want to develop the way music is used in our worship.



Our Journey: going deeper in faith

We want to provide more opportunities for people to deepen their faith.

We want to deepen our relationships with one another.



Making New Disciples

Our calling: telling our story and helping others meet Jesus

We want to include more opportunities in our life together to hear one another's faith stories

We want to give one another more confidence to talk honestly about our faith

We want to communicate what is happening in the individual groups and activities that are part of our church life.

We want to develop more small groups where people can be nurtured and grow in faith together.

Transforming Communities

Our culture: Invitation, welcome and hospitality

We want to get even better at inviting people to be part of all we do.

We want to continue our ethos of welcome and look at ways we could enhance what we do.

We want to provide a safe space where individuals and families can feel valued and cared for.

We want to make our buildings more welcoming particularly Coton Parish Hall.

To this we would add **proactive outreach into new areas of housing in the parish.**

By ensuring we are part of any initiatives that the diocese or Mission Hub at Bedworth are developing and working in collaboration with other churches in the town to reach out to the thousands of new homes being built.

Being open and supportive to the people and needs of the local area.

Engaging effectively with other networks and agencies.

Being the hands and feet of Christ's body in Coton and Astley.

OUR CHURCH



Our Life together and our people

There are currently 73 on the Electoral Roll. We have two Associate Ministers (one in full time employment and the other, now retired from secular employment and with links to Hospital Chaplaincy at our local hospital) and a Licensed Lay Minister (Reader). We have other members of the congregation who get involved with leading worship. In recent months we have actively encouraged other newer, members to explore leading parts of our worship. The Ministry Team which includes the two wardens meet regularly to plan the worship at All Saints. The two wardens are supported by a team of assistant wardens.



My Church Family is very important to me. It is a loving, caring, supportive group of people who I can trust and is an extension of my own family. They are friends and are always there for me.

During my 60 year association with All Saints I have been involved in many roles. Worshipper, administrator, lesson reader, intercessor, music group member to name but a few. It has given me the opportunity to share that love and the glory of Christ Jesus, through the Church. Family.

Joan Berry.

Sadly, we lost our worship band some time ago. This is something we would very much like to restart when the time is right. There is also an organist who currently only plays for special occasions.

We employ a part time Parish Administrator who works weekday mornings and also deals with most of the day-to-day financial matters. We also have members of the congregation who act as vergers as and when required for weddings and funerals.

With lockdown, home communions and visits into the local care homes ceased and we currently have limited options for taking communion to the housebound. This is something we know we need to address.

We have 4 small groups, two Bible based and two social – a Ladies Book club and a Men’s curry night. This is an area for growth.

Healing Ministry

Our church has a long history of this powerful ministry. Although we no longer hold monthly healing services, we still often use the 5th Sundays for Healing Ministry services. Over the years we have heard some powerful testimonies and seen God powerfully work in people’s lives through this ministry. We would love to regrow this aspect of our wider ministry to the community. We maintain a confidential prayer chain for those in need of God’s help.

Messy Church

We launched our Messy Church as a response to the absence of children on our church. With basically only children in the church being those of families seeking baptism. PCC met with the leader of a local youth and families initiative to see what we could do to engage with families. After a long discussion looking at various options, we asked the question, "If we were to do just one thing to address our concern, what would you suggest?" The answer was unequivocal. Start a Messy Church. That meeting was in autumn 2013. We



had contacts with a local church that had been running a Messy Church for some time and asked if we could visit and talk to them about their experience of setting it up. Following that we spent time looking at the practicalities and attendant costs and resourcing. Individuals in the church were approached and a team brought together. We set a launch day for the 3rd Sunday in March



2014. We put information into local schools and a lot of prayer. Fears of a no-show were quickly dispelled as we had over 50 people including over 20 children. Our average congregation has been in the upper 50's for the almost 10 years we have been running. Twice we have topped the 100 mark! Since restarting after the pandemic, we are averaging around 60 attendees each month. We target primary school age children but have a "baby/toddler corner" as well.

Format: 3rd Sunday afternoon of each month starting at 3:30 In our Parish Hall

We start with an hour of craft activities with tea, coffee, squash and biscuits available.



The activities are all linked to a Bible story which is printed in our Programme along with details of future Messy Churches and linked events and services.

This is followed by a "Celebration" based around the Bible Story. It includes linking the activities to the story and builds on the "talk about" questions for each activity along with songs, prayers and active "worship"

By the time that has concluded, the main part of the hall is miraculously transformed into a dining room with a hot meal waiting for the families and helpers.

By about 5:30, the families are fed, both physically and spiritually and many help us to clear the hall before heading home.

Messy Church is our best attended service with between 70 and 90 attending, and gives us access to well over a hundred families. They receive monthly invites to Messy Church, Morning Celebration and other family focused events both at our church and within the town.



Over the years we have had some baptisms and confirmations from our Messy Church family. One hope for the future is that we will be able to better support the children as they outgrow what we do. Currently we have a number of older siblings who work as helpers alongside the team. For many in this congregation, it is the only church service they regularly attend. We are officially registered with "Messy Church" organisation.

Lay ministry

Our church is blessed by people who give generously of their time to do the day to day tasks that need doing. Flower arranging, cleaning, making coffee, churchyard tiding, gardening are just the tip of an iceberg of jobs that keep the buildings as welcoming spaces for our community. We have a number of people actively involved in ministry in services. One of them is currently exploring a call to formal ministry.

Communications

We have a Parish Office where people can contact us, as well as through Facebook and our website. We have a weekly newsletter for the two churches which has information about services and upcoming events. It has



a list of people and families who have asked for prayers. The newsletter is emailed out and printed copies put into the churches. Some housebound members of our church receive a copy by post. Families, who have given permission, are sent

My parents were married in All Saints in 1938 where I was Christened. I attended Sunday school. I was confirmed there and joined the Youth Fellowship. In 1966 I moved away where I married and my daughter was born. She was Christened in All Saints by special request. In 1975 we moved back to Nuneaton and lived in Camp Hill where, I worshiped for 40 years, until the church closed. Feeling adrift I decided to return to the church of my youth. The day I returned I was met with great warmth and fellowship. I have been welcomed into the life of the church. I am very happy to be back where my Christian journey began.

Jean White

invitations to Messy Church and Morning Celebration in the week before the service. They also receive other appropriate information about Family Friendly events such as the Crib Service, Christingle and other suitable events in the town and other churches.



Since starting to attend All Saints church, after Covid, we have been made to feel very welcome by everyone. One of the best aspects of the church is the inclusivity; they allow the children to stay in and sometimes participate in the services. We thoroughly enjoy the morning celebration (and accompanying breakfast) for our family, whilst the communion services certainly cater to our more traditional beliefs. David, Vicky and Orlaith

Is the Holy Spirit calling you to be our next vicar?

We are looking for someone who is excited at the prospect of working with us in our parish on developing our worship and ministry to the parish and on mission and outreach into the new developments. The population of the borough has increased by at least 10,000 in the past 5 years.

With another 2000+ new homes planned in just our parish, this growth rate will continue. We are passionate that these new homes are reached by our churches. We know from the large number of families who have engaged with our Messy Church over the past decade that there is a harvest waiting for workers. We need to be searching out the fruit that needs picking. We acknowledge we need to work across parish boundaries if we are to fulfil the great commission Jesus gives us.

Are you the person who can help us do this?

We are seeking someone to:

Inspire

Inspire, challenge and encourage us to deepen our walk with Jesus.

Lead

To be a listening, enabling and delegating leader who gives time and energy to the benefice and to lead us forward in mission in our parish and collaboratively with neighbouring parishes.

Enable Mission

You need to be passionate about discipleship and committed to bringing all ages to faith in Jesus Christ and enabling the church in this ministry. This would include continuing and strengthening links with local schools.

Are we your next church?

All Saints has a committed core of people, who give tirelessly of themselves and their gifts. Over the last few years our vision has been to 'be the people God wants us to be'

Our church is a place where local people feel safe and invest in supporting each other.

Alongside the difficulties and sadness, the pandemic provided us with many opportunities to reach out in love to support families with a variety of needs.

We welcome all, and we try to ensure that our faith is shown through actions rather than words alone. Messy Church was well established pre-pandemic, and was quickly re-established when it reopened. It has been central to much of our outreach to families. We communicate twice a month with an ever-growing list of families about our two main services for families – Messy Church and Morning Celebration. The latter being an informal service which starts with a light breakfast and is designed to engage with the unchurched families as well as giving a different experience to our regular worshipers.

We have a history of regularly leading assemblies at the Church school. We regularly welcome groups from local schools, including the secondary school, into the church to talk about various aspects of the life and purpose of the church in the community. We also get school groups visiting as part of their local history work relating to World War 2.

Our buildings and grounds

The Church Building

There has been a church on the site since Saxon times. The later 12th century church was destroyed in an air raid in 1941. German prisoners of war volunteered to help rebuild the



present church making All Saints Chilvers Coton a focus of international reconciliation and a witness to the healing that Jesus can bring.

The famous novelist, George Eliot, (Mary Ann Evans) was baptised in the church. The church features as “Shepperton” in her novel, “Scenes of Clerical Life”. Mary Ann Evans (George Eliot) was a worshipper at All Saints until she was 21. About 10 years ago we installed a coffee bar in the church and updated the sound system to be a full AV system including provision for a worship group with microphones, foldback etc. In response to the Covid Pandemic we have installed a Labyrinth with a memorial stone at its centre on the lawned area in front of the church. This was formally opened on December 3rd 2022 by the Viscount Daventry, patron of the benefice.

The church has a fine peal of 10 bells which are regularly rung by visiting bell ringers who also often ring for weddings and other special events.

The Churchyard (8 acres, about 3.2 ha) surrounds the church and is one of the larger open spaces in the Borough. The area is mainly headstones but with some grassed areas. There are cremation plots and a memorial wall. It is a closed church yard and its maintenance is the responsibility of the borough council. It is used for burial re-openings only and burial of ashes.

The Vicarage is a pleasant 5-bedroom dwelling built in 1934. It is centrally heated, has a modern kitchen and is double-glazed throughout. It has a fairly large garden which adjoins the churchyard. It is a ten-minute walk to the town centre.



The Parish Hall was built in 1932 and consists of a large main hall with a high barrel roof, a stage, a small hall divided from the main hall by a sliding partition, a comfortably furnished parish lounge with AV facilities and the parish office.

Church usage includes our Monthly Messy Church, Little Saints Play and Stay and meetings including PCC, socials and other events such as table top sales and seasonal fairs.

Additionally, the hall is widely used by the community. We host a Scout troop and a number of other groups.



The hall is equipped with a professional standard kitchen which has recently had a new catering oven, fridge freezer and water heaters. Following a recent inspection we have been awarded a food hygiene rating of 5.



Lettings of the hall pay the caretaker/site manager's wages and running costs with a small additional income going to the church.



Blitz Ball commemorating 75 years since rededication after being bombed in WW2



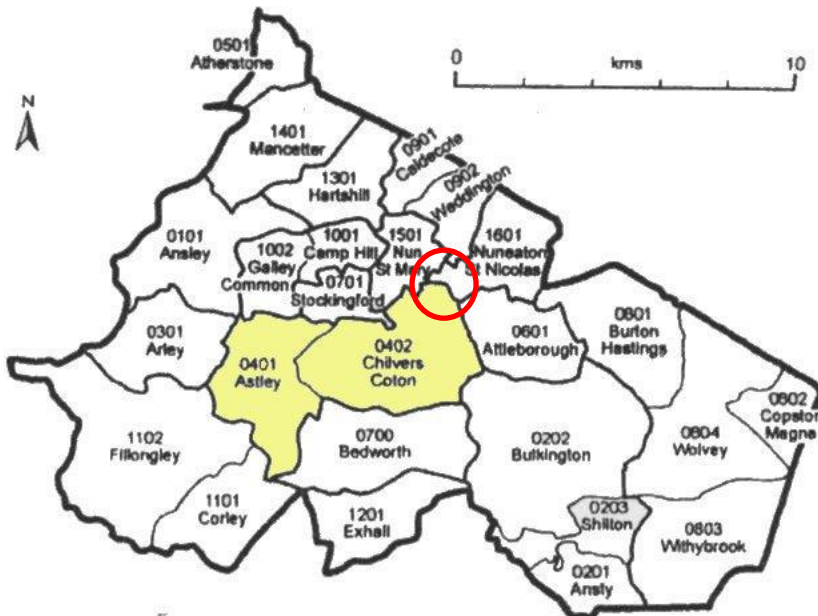
Messy Church



Spring Fair

The Parish

The Parish of Chilvers Coton lies in Nuneaton Deanery and covers approximately 400 hectares (1000 acres) within the borough of Nuneaton and Bedworth. It lies to the south of the town centre. It lies astride the main A444 trunk road to Coventry and also the Nuneaton - Coventry local railway line.



Nuneaton town centre

The borough of Nuneaton and Bedworth has a population estimated currently at over 130,000. It contains areas of social deprivation through to very affluent areas.

Within Coton Parish

The population of the parish is recorded as 15575 based on the current Church Urban Fund figures and is predominantly middle-aged, skilled and semi-skilled workers. The south-east corner of the Parish is an Urban Priority area. The parish is classified as being among the most deprived in the country (Church Urban Fund data).

The majority of Nuneaton's Muslim community live within the parish which would indicate that it may be more ethnically diverse than the town.

An extensive new housing development with over 1000 houses has been built in the parish and currently there are two more areas being developed for housing. In the area designated as Heath End/Arbury at least 1525 houses are to be built and the Gypsy Lane site is having over 575 houses built on it. These provide a huge opportunity for Mission and Outreach.

At the same time over 1000 new houses are being built in our neighbouring parish of Attleborough. We are already talking to them about the possibility of collaboratively working on this opportunity. The development policy documents for the largest site include provision for a primary school and local centre including community facilities. Similar references to community provisions are in the Policy documents for the other sites. These are places where we could perhaps establish church activities.

Industry - his includes light engineering, electronics, a boatyard and extensive warehousing. There are dozens of small independent firms based in the parish, as well as several large factories and distribution centres.

Commerce and retail outlets - there is a typical urban mix, including town centre shops and stores, street market, public houses, restaurants, timber and builders' merchants, car sales rooms, offices (solicitors, accountants) and local authority offices.

Rope Walk, an indoor shopping development was built in the town centre area of the parish several years ago and there are extensive plans for the regeneration of the town centre which includes a Hilton Hotel and multiscreen cinema which are currently being built (2023)

Bermuda Park, a large area in the south of the Parish with a mix of commercial premises and warehouses, hotels, restaurants, fast food outlets, a multi-screen cinema and other leisure facilities. There is also an additional railway station at Bermuda Park which opened in 2016

The main station is Trent Valley near the centre of the town. It's main line link to Euston Station makes Nuneaton a dormitory town for commuters as it is only about a one hour journey into London.

Sports and leisure - in the parish we have a competition size swimming pool with leisure pool and fitness complex, the Nuneaton Lawn Tennis Club, a cricket ground, municipal park with museum and art gallery. There is an all-weather athletics track and stadium with football pitches and a number of other recreation grounds plus other of sports, leisure and social clubs.

Schools - there are 2 Infants' schools, 2 Primary schools 2 Junior schools, 2 Secondary schools and the Oakwood Special Schools (Primary and Secondary)

We have very positive links with our own school, All Saints CofE Primary School and Nursery. We have established links with two other primary schools and with the Secondary school, George Eliot Academy.

Three of the schools in the parish are Roman Catholic schools.



Assembly at our Church Primary School

Hospitals and health services - there is a large modern general hospital with an accident and emergency unit, a maternity unit and a day-care hospice within the hospital grounds. The hospital has a new training centre and a number of specialist units and clinics.

It is worth noting that the hospital is undergoing significant expansion to meet the needs of a growing local population.

There are a number of sheltered and semi sheltered housing complexes in the parish.

There are 11 general practitioners' surgeries and 6 dental surgeries. The ambulance depot has recently relocated to new premises on the hospital site. The hospital has a well-established resident chaplaincy team augmented by a team of volunteers.

Worship pattern

08:30 (8-15)

1st Sunday Communion (BCP)
2nd Sunday Communion (BCP)
3rd Sunday Communion (BCP)
4th Sunday Communion (BCP)
5th Sunday Communion (BCP)

10:30 (30-40)

Holy Communion (CW)
Worship for All
Holy Communion (CW)
Morning Celebration (breakfast 10am)
Morning Worship (healing or songs of praise theme)

2:30

Baptism as required
Baptism as required
3:30 Messy Church

Church family Baptisms are included in a 10:30 service

Sunday Attendance 2023 8.30am 5-12. 10.30am 20-35

Messy Church Attendance 2023: 47, which includes 21 children

Electoral Roll: 71

The church has good sound and audio-visual equipment that is available for any service. Radio microphones are used at most services. There is an induction hearing loop system installed. All our mainstream services are on screen. Although we currently do not have a worship group/band we have a complete set of equipment for one including microphones and foldback systems. It is our desire to return to live music for some services.

Baptisms - in 2023 there were 18 baptisms. Currently, the Clergy carry out baptism preparation. A lay visitor sends anniversary cards to children each year until they are 5.

Weddings - in 2023 there were 6 weddings and one blessing.

Funerals - in 2023 there were 12 funerals.

Ecumenical and other links

Links exist with a strong Nuneaton Christians Together, a group which has representatives from most of the churches in the town. There is a large purpose-built Mosque in the parish. We have a good relationship with the Mosque leadership.

We have links with the hospital Chaplaincy team.



Worthy of mention is the Saints Project which is an Anglican led café and hub for the community based in the town centre, with a three-point vision for bringing community transformation to the heart of Nuneaton. All Saints, along with other local churches has had key part in the establishment of Saints.

Two members of the church founded and run a charity, which works predominantly with a school in Kenya. It is widely supported by the church community by personal donations, fund raising events and donations from our tithed giving. Our church school also supports their work.

Governance

All Saints has a Parochial Church Council (PCC) which meets monthly. There is a Standing Committee of 4 which meets on an ad hoc basis.

Additionally there is a "Preachers" team meeting monthly. It includes Licenced and other Lay members who help plan and deliver the range of church services. It actively encourages other members of the congregation to get involved and supports any visiting preachers.

All Saints PCC has currently 1 vacancy.

We have 3 representatives on Deanery Synod

One of the team is also part of the diocesan discernment / vocations group working with potential candidates as an adviser.

We also have links to the local Hospital Chaplaincy.

Finance

Financial Summary

Our church has three main streams of income, voluntary giving, letting out the Parish Hall and income from historic investments. For 2023 our planned giving was just under £22000. Hall income was £12500. Dividends (restricted) £22000.

The expenditure is very similar from year to year, generally in pace with inflation, most costs being of a relatively fixed nature such as heat and light, staff wages, parish share.

Expenditure for 2023 was £84,357. We currently pay about half of the total cost of ministry of the parish (parish share), a situation we would like to redress sooner rather than later.

Our priority is to increase income, preferably from existing members of the church giving regularly and attracting income from new church members. People now use cash much less than they did, also we had people attending services online. We have responded to this situation by introducing new ways of giving alongside the traditional ways.

Our ways of giving now are:

- Parish Giving Scheme which includes C of E Regular giving scheme and one-off payments both of which can be accessed via our QR code or online.
- Direct payment -into the Church bank account
- Cash or cheque -plate at the back of church and as a collection during our main services
- Debit or Credit card -Contactless Giving in church
- Donate button -on All Saints Coton web site



A full financial report is available on request

St Mary the Virgin Astley



Astley Church once shone a beacon of light guiding travellers through the forest from the medieval church spire. Let our church be your guiding light to God and a warm welcome is waiting for you.



Welcome to this beautiful and prayerful House of God where a spiritual presence through worship has been experienced for many centuries

Churchwardens Welcome

Welcome to our Parish Profile for St Mary the Virgin, Astley. The Churchwardens are Jeanette and Leonard and we welcome you to our historic village church, our friendly congregation and village community. We hope this church will be your calling and we are praying for you, that God will lead you to Astley.



Jeanette has been Churchwarden since 2005 and was born in Astley. Jeanette went to the village school until it closed in 1972 and very much enjoys looking after the church, people, and cares about village life.



Leonard has been in Astley most of School and cares family have lived years.

Churchwarden since 2008 and has lived his life. Leonard also went to Astley about village life. Leonard and his and farmed in the local area for many

Jeanette and Leonard work together well and are proud to be custodians of Astley Church and to spread the good news of God through actions and sharing our friendship. The church is not just a building and we share our Christian faith by taking part in community and church social events and by actively showing to be a caring member of church life. We sincerely hope our profile will invite you to come and join us and come to enjoy all that our special community has to offer. We would love you to lead and encourage us in growth and faith in this House of God.

Jeanette Sutton and Leonard Brandreth
Astley Churchwardens

Astley Church and Diocesan Vision

Worshipping God

Our Heart: Our church wants to grow and needs to develop worship.

We have regular Sunday worship and the congregation join in and take part.

We need a Vicar who will work with and lead our established Lay Readers and grow with this team.

Music concerts have been held in Astley Church to help everyone experience a spiritual place of worship and we are keen to host concerts once more.

We need a Vicar to work with Astley PCC to enable the church to grow and share new ideas in ways of worship and enhance the Christian presence in the local community.

We are pleased to work with our sister church All Saint's Coton to provide different forms of worship for everyone, and to be there for people whatever the need.



Traditional Harvest Festival and Christmas services which many local people still enjoy and support and are popular events. We wish to continue these happy services.

Making New Disciples

Our Calling: We are grateful for the good work achieved over the years through hard work and dedication. We want to share our church building and friendship with all in this beautiful and prayerful House of God.

New comers to our church are made very welcome and we want to find new ways to help others find their faith in this place spiritual place.

We open the church to visitors and this has already brought people to church and join our church family.

We want to be more open and supportive to new people and needs of the local area. The congregation and Astley Social Group enjoy welcoming everyone who comes to join us it is very rewarding and gives us a sense of joy.

The Vicar may visit the privately-run village nursery if parents are willing to engage and support this opportunity for future growth in faith.

We would like a Vicar who has experience in dealing with people of all ages and has great communication skills. Be able to interact with new village residents and help us to support more people.



Transforming Communities

Our Culture: Outreach by our social group events and church open days. Traditional Harvest and Christmas celebrations which people still enjoy. Friendly, welcoming, and home-made cakes a speciality.

We provide outreach to others by working closely with Astley Social Group members and reach out to people via fun events and activities. Outreach to all during church open weekends available to everyone, who would not normally come into a church building or prayerful setting. We are very supportive of each other and happy to assist. We provide emotional support in whichever way is best and individuals feel able to talk. We make excellent homemade cake with tea and fellowship.

A beautiful and historic church building that has a special prayerful feeling to those who come in and to many it feels like home. We want to share this place.

Strong with local history and national heritage using our volunteer members, their knowledge, and social networks. We are passionate about our history.

We need a Vicar who will join in village ways of life and come along to support village events.



We need a Vicar that will work with village residents and become their friend.

The Parish

Welcome to Astley Church. Welcome to our special place of worship and to our caring community. Astley village is located 4 miles from Nuneaton and 8 miles from Coventry with the A444 and the M6 and M42 motorways nearby. The roads to Astley village are rural in nature. The parish of Astley has a population of approximately 280 people and 72 homes. Astley is mainly an agricultural parish and the farming land and most of the housing around Astley are owned by Viscount Daventry of Arbury Estate. Lord Daventry is the Patron of Astley Church. There are currently 38 people on the church electoral roll. Astley has no shops or local pubs and has a bus service twice a week. It has a privately-run children's nursery located in the original Astley village school and this once Church of England school sadly closed in 1973. The Landmark Trust currently lease nearby Astley Castle from Arbury Estate, which has been restored as holiday accommodation and is a popular location for holiday breaks, and the Church and Castle are of great interest to many visitors during joint open weekends.

The local population is varied in age with some families living in the area for many generations. Families have longstanding ties with the church. Just outside the parish is a long stay nursing care home for people living with dementia, which has around 180 residents. Inside the parish is the popular Astley Book Farm which is located 2 miles away from Astley where visitors can enjoy refreshments and can look at and buy a vast number of second-hand books. There are also a few other small businesses. Over recent months, solar panel energy projects are still in the early stages of planning around Astley, and work continues in co-operation with Arbury Estate.

Astley is unique in many ways. The Church has a peaceful and spiritual history which goes back in time around a thousand years. It is deep in prayer and worship and to many individuals, it feels like home.

The village has an active Astley Parish Council who care for the village and its parish residents. Astley PCC has re-established a good relationship with Astley Parish Council and looks forward to working together for the good of the village, all residents, and the church congregation.

Astley Church lies prominently in the village of Astley and has a friendly and supportive congregation. The Churchwardens and volunteers ensure the church is welcoming for worship and for visitors. We want to share our church and fellowship with everyone.

Astley Church's History

Astley Church is a Grade I listed building and the village is proud to have this medieval building as the village church. The church was built in 1343 by Sir Thomas de Astley as a collegiate church, where monks and priests would sing for the souls of his family. It was once the size of a cathedral and cruciform in shape with a central tower and tall spire, transepts, long nave, and a Chancel. It was called the Lanthorn of Arden as the church was situated in the Forest of Arden and a light from the spire would guide travellers through the thick forest. The original spire eventually collapsed from the tower around 1550 due to lead theft, and fell into the church building causing a great deal of structural damage. The church building was thankfully restored by Sir Richard Chamberlayne in 1607 and Astley Church being reformed into the village church we see and have in use today. It is now one fifth of its former size. The church has past links to The Grey family (Lady Jane Grey) and the family once owned nearby Astley Castle. There are also close links also to the writer George Eliot (Mary Ann Evans) whose parents were married in Astley Church and George Eliot was born and lived on Arbury Estate. Astley Church is Knebley Church in her book "Mr Gilfil's Love Story" and the church's interior is beautifully described in this book.

There are beautiful original historic treasures still visible today such as 14C medieval misericords with paintings of apostles and prophets, post reformation wall paintings and alabaster figures representing The Grey family. There are 5 church bells in the tower. 4 bells are dated 1607 and the tenor bell was added in 1772. Astley Church is included in the book by Simon Jenkins "1000 Best Churches" and Nikolaus Pevsner's book "The Buildings of England".

Alongside the church lies Astley Castle, once a fortified manor house, and the building has been owned by four families over the centuries, The Astley's, The Grey's, The Chamberlayne's and the current Lord Daventry. Astley Castle became a ruin following a fire in 1978 but it has thankfully been restored by the Landmark Trust, and can now be booked for holidays and it is a popular holiday destination.

Worship

Astley Church has a regular service each Sunday at 3.30pm which is the Evening Prayer service according to the 1662 Book of Common Prayer. On the fourth Sunday the service is replaced by a Holy Communion service according to the Common Worship book. Most of our Sunday services are provided by our appreciated Lay Readers and Holy Communion by our Vicar, which is currently the Associate Minister from our sister church at All Saints Chilvers Coton. Easter morning and Christmas Day Holy Communion services start at the earlier time of 9am.

There are further special and traditional church services throughout the year being our popular Harvest Festival, where the church is decorated with harvest produce and the Carol Service by Candlelight with a local silver band. These traditional church services are popular and well attended, and these special services are also presided by the Associate Minister. The congregation and local community enjoy getting the church ready and looking wonderful to celebrate Harvest and Christmas.

The two Churchwardens are supported by sides-people and members of the church congregation. Now that Covid-19 appears to have become a distant memory normal church routines have now returned.

The organ is dated 1906 and further restored in 2013. Currently there is no organist to play during Sunday services but hymn music is provided using a music speaker and an organist is sought to play at other services when needed.

During Covid-19 we were unable to hold Sunday services but we all kept in contact through telephone calls and messages to ensure we were safe and keeping well. Astley Church soon opened for people to meet in private prayer and then our Sunday services returned once restrictions lifted, and Astley PCC followed all the government guidance as given.

The church congregation members and all our volunteers are friendly and very supportive of each other. We outreach to others via our Astley Social Group to friends old and new. Homemade cakes with tea are our speciality. We welcome everyone who joins our social activities, church events and all who just want to visit the church. People have commented how peaceful and prayerful the church is and have appreciated their time in this special place of worship.



Harvest Festival with harvest produce



Carol Service by Candlelight with Band

Community of Astley Village

Astley village is a small group of houses which the majority are still owned by Arbury Estate. The village and surrounding land also owned by Lord Daventry and is therefore Astley is special and unique in many ways. It has a community building Astley Reading Room which is used for social events throughout the year. Astley PCC has the responsibility for the daily running of the Reading Room but this building is owned by Arbury Estate. The Reading Room has a fully fitted kitchen and disabled toilet facilities. There are no toilet facilities inside Astley Church as there is no water supply connected to the church building.

Astley is very fortunate to have a loyal and hard-working group of volunteers called Astley Social Group. These volunteers organise fund-raising village activities for the church congregation and friends. Activities are always fun and appreciated by all. Majority of the funds raised are towards the running of Astley Church and the Social Group provides fun events for everyone via the village Reading Room. Astley Social Group organise interesting talks with guest speakers followed by tea and cake on the 2nd Tuesday of each month held in the Reading Room. These are all well supported events by the local community and for visitors from further away, and include our June summer open weekend with stalls, games and refreshments and the annual Heritage Open Days weekend in September. We also thoroughly enjoy quiz and bingo nights with a fish and chip supper.



Inside Astley Reading Room looking lovely and ready to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III as organised by Astley Social Group May 2023

Coronavirus had an impact reducing the ability to meet socially during 2020/2021 but we have now continued our social group gatherings. Initially we all met inside the Church so everyone could socially distance, and then returning to the village Reading Room once again after restrictions ended and confidence returned. Everyone has made a great effort, and it is lovely to see that people have happily returned to these events and fellowship once more.



Astley Social Group meeting inside Astley Church in July 2022. We listened to a talk by a guest speaker and all enjoyed fellowship, cups of tea and cakes.



Astley Church takes part in the annual event Heritage Open Days every September and volunteers ensure the church is kept open and welcoming to visitors, whether visitors are

worshippers or just curious about history. The PCC feels this is another way of outreach to everyone who may not normally come into a place of worship. Below is a copy of a wonderful email from the Heritage Open Days organisers, giving feedback from a visitor from the event in September 2022.

Dear PCC. I just wanted to get in touch to say that we had some lovely feedback from a visitor who visited your event and just wanted to share it with you, Charlotte.

“What a wonderful and beautiful Church. The scenes from outside the Castle are picturesque. On entering the feel was one of calm and peace. Especially the day after we heard the sad news of the death of Queen Elizabeth II. The flowers were beautiful and the background music just right. The Church has been lovingly looked after. The history of the Church was astounding to hear from the lovely volunteers who care so deeply about this church and preserving its history as well as the function of a house of God. Thank you all for opening your beautiful Church for us to look inside. We came away happy and glad we had come for a visit to share some time with you all.”

Best wishes

Charlotte Tindle
Heritage Open Days Registration Assistant

A visitor inside Astley Church enjoying a moment of amazement and peace.

Inside Astley Church Heritage Open Days in September 2022.



A Book of Condolence for Her Majesty the Queen Elizabeth II and special flower displays and information for all who visit. The Book was signed by 130 visitors.



The church flowers are maintained by volunteers on a flower rota and cleaning days are arranged regularly.

The church flowers are made more special during open days and special events and financed from our church flower fund. The church is beautifully decorated by volunteers at Harvest and Christmas and we all enjoy taking part in these traditional events during our year.

Following our Harvest Festival all the produce is put to excellent use. Social Group and church volunteers divide all the harvest goods into baskets and these are taken to local individuals, the local Mary Ann Evans Hospice and to the Nuneaton Foodbank.

Some of the produce is also auctioned for us all to buy during our fun Harvest Auction. This is an excellent way of giving away beautiful harvest food and raising church funds.

The church enjoys visits from individuals staying at Astley Castle and across the Country and other groups throughout the year such as the George Eliot Fellowship and walking groups who wish to visit the church as a part of their day out. Every effort is made to welcome everyone to our church. Astley Church has its own Facebook page, church website, Google business page and found on A Church near You. These are all managed by our volunteers to help promote worship, events, and activities to ensure Astley Church is open and available to all.

See Facebook: St Mary the Virgin Astley and website: www.astleychurch.org



Visitors inside Astley Church during the summer open weekend June 2023

Administration

Astley Church shares a Parish Office and the Parish Secretary is based at our sister church All Saints Chilvers Coton, and Astley PCC financially contributes towards administration costs. Some administration is also completed by the Churchwardens. The Parish Secretary is our first point of contact for all Astley Church services including, Christenings, Weddings, and Funerals, liaising with Astley Churchwardens and we all enjoy a great working relationship. A weekly information letter "Pew Sheet" is provided by the Parish Office which gives useful information, news, and upcoming events to the congregation for both churches in the Benefice, and all information is passed to the Parish Secretary for this purpose. The living accommodation for Astley is located at The Vicarage, Chilvers Coton in Nuneaton, which is 5 miles from Astley.

Finance and Expenditure

Astley Church is a Grade I listed building and restoration and repairs will always be needed to keep this historic building in good order. The building is regularly maintained by our Churchwardens and a loyal group of maintenance volunteers who take pride in looking after the church, keeping it cared for and welcoming to all. Repair costs are always an issue and fundraising events help to partly fund some of the repairs, however most repair funds are met in the form of grants. Astley Church had its Quinquennial Inspection completed in April 2023 and is working with the church architect to agree a programme of future repairs and restoration.

Astley PCC has already completed a major wall painting restoration project working alongside English Heritage which ended in 2010. Recent successfully completed projects include the restoration of the church organ, update to the church building electrical system, a new Chancel carpet, churchyard tree inspection and action taken and the restoration and conservation of the fittings and headstocks to the five church bells. These projects were successfully funded by grants obtained by Astley PCC and other private donations. Full details of these restoration projects can be found on our Astley Church website.



Astley church bell fittings restoration completed by John Taylor and Co Bellfoundry in February 2022. PCC funded by grants and fundraising.

The main and largest PCC expenditures are the Parish Share and the church building insurance and normal fund-raising activities held throughout the year pay for these expenses. The Parish Share has always been met in full by Astley PCC.

Detailed information concerning the church accounts can be found in the annual report but a brief outline of the accounts for 2022 are as follows:

Astley PCC Finances				
YEAR	2020	2021	2022	2023
INCOME				
Offertory	4628	4943	4911	2916
Tax refund on Gift Aid	1338	996	1512	1080
Fund raising & Donations	1624	4467	10821	11536
Other	2874	6711	5831	9764
Bell restoration	NIL	2444	7000	NIL
TOTAL	10464	19561	30075	25296
EXPENDITURE				
Parish Share	*3050	6560	6100	6100
Insurance	3428	2756	2977	3143
Electric	1078	1343	1244	1493
Maintenance/repairs	6856	4644	7004	4078
Other	2468	2727	3062	5588
Bell restoration	NIL	3474	9481	NIL
TOTAL	16880	21504	29868	20402
Surplus/deficit	- 6416	- 1943	+ 206	+4802
Bank Balance				
1st Jan 2019	31st Dec 2020	31st Dec 2021	31st Dec 2022	
£12,036	£11,106	£9,164	£9,370	£14,172

*** In 2020 the PCC availed of Covid-19 Parish Share Scheme meaning 50% Reduction in Parish Share**

Electoral Roll 2023: 37

Property

No property is owned by Astley PCC. Astley PCC rents the Reading Room from Arbury Estate and pays a minimal rental fee. Astley PCC therefore maintains the internal and general upkeep of Astley Reading Room and pays for bills such as the electricity and other general repairs. Hobby groups such as the Art Group and Sewing Group regularly hires the Reading Room from the PCC and meetings are also held by Astley Parish Council and Astley PCC in the Reading Room.



Astley Social Group organised lunch to celebrate Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee held outside Astley Reading Room in June 2022

Summary

Astley Church is an historic place of worship and we are very fortunate to have this wonderful building as our village church. We hold regular Sunday worship which is loyally supported by the congregation and we welcome visitors who also join us at any time during our church services. It is a church building of national importance. The building has undergone successful restoration projects in the past which have been partly funded by fund-raising activities and fun events. Astley PCC has sought most restoration funds by obtaining grants from various organisations. It is accepted that this historic church will continue to need restoration and funds will be needed to enable further projects to be completed, but the enthusiasm is still there for this to continue. Astley PCC understands all the challenges, being the custodian of this medieval church, but accepts these challenges with belief and conviction and proud to do so.

The vision of Astley PCC and the local congregation is for Astley Church to continue and for its involvement in village life to grow and thrive. We do acknowledge the need for future growth. We want to welcome more people to worship and join our church family. All our congregation members and volunteers have a caring nature and nothing is too much trouble. Over recent years new families have moved into houses in Astley village and the PCC welcomes support and new ideas how to encourage new residents to join our worship and to grow. The PCC wants to look at the idea of working with the privately-run village nursery.

Astley PCC and the congregation look forward to working with a Vicar who will join our village way of life and help us grow in a way that enables more people to join our worship and continue

to support our fun activities. With no new housing in the parish and no longer a school nearby, the PCC acknowledges this will be challenging. The PCC looks forward to working alongside the Vicar to help achieve this need for future growth and to find positive ways to succeed. Astley Church is a special place to the local community and to all the people it serves, whatever need that might be.

How to Apply

For further details and an application form please contact:

Debbie Niblett
Mission and Discipleship Team Administrator
Tel: 07943 314739
Email: debbie.niblett@Coventry.Anglican.org

For informal conversations, please contact:
Archdeacon Missioner, Ven Barry Dugmore, on 07487 578311
Barry.Dugmore@Coventry.Anglican.org
or
Assistant Area Dean, Alison Evans 02476 736002
htavicar1@gmail.com

Closing date for applications: tbc

Interviews: tbc

An application form can be downloaded from the Diocesan Website:
<https://www.coventry.anglican.org/about/vacancies/current-vacancies.php>

Enhanced DBS disclosure is required for this post.