

# St Oswald's Bollington – our Parish Profile



'A connecting and transforming community,  
empowered by God to  
act with compassion in the world'

St Oswald's Church, Bollington Road, Bollington, Macclesfield SK10 5EG



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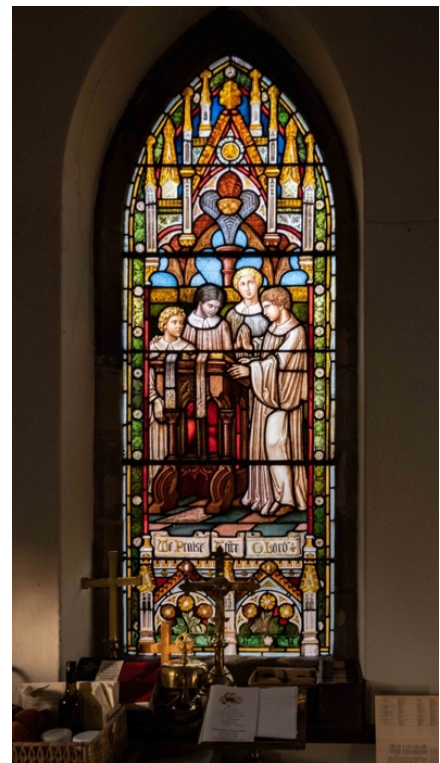


*Afternoon tea and cake*

*We enjoy getting together*



*One of our stained-glass windows*





*Photo from TripAdvisor*

*A view of Bollington from White Nancy*

## Bollington – a great place to be!

The Sunday Times has called Bollington ‘a hidden gem’, saying it is one of the best places to live in the North West.

Locally, it has long been known as ‘The Happy Valley’, and its sugarloaf-shaped ‘White Nancy’, built by a local family to commemorate the Battle of Waterloo, stands proud on a hill overlooking the town.

Here is why Bollington wins such favour:



cc-by-sa/2.0 - White Nancy, Bollington by Chris Morgan - geograph.org.uk/4963956

*Photo © Chris Morgan (ccby-sa/2.0).*

*White Nancy*

### Where we are

Bollington lies along a valley right up against the Pennine range in a beautiful corner of northeast Cheshire. We are at the very edge of the Peak District National Park, surrounded by greenbelt, and also on the edge of the Cheshire Plain. We are just north of Macclesfield, and a mile away from the affluent ‘Golden Triangle’ of Wilmslow, Alderley Edge and Prestbury (think Man United football players). We are 19 miles south of Manchester and 12 miles west of Buxton.

Bollington is long but not wide, running for about two miles, which gives it the feel of a meandering village. It is fed by the River Dean, which has shaped its history.



## How we got here – a thumbnail history

For thousands of years Bollington was part of Macclesfield Forest, and apart from the Romans marching through on their way from Chester to Buxton, nothing much happened here. By Norman times it was an obscure part of the vast parish of Prestbury. Then in the late 17th century, when the Industrial Revolution needed more waterpower, Bollington came into its own. Our River Dean was ideal for cotton mills, and by the late 17th century cotton mills were springing up. Many workers for the mills were moved down from Bolton in Lancashire, and by the early 1800s Bollington was becoming a bustling industrial village. The wealth of the local cotton industry built some of our finest buildings. By 1830 Bollington had gained a canal and by 1870 it had a railway.

By 1834 Bollington was big enough to deserve its own parish and St John's was built. Then St Oswald's was consecrated in 1908 and became the parish church in 2003. In its 112-year existence we have had 19 vicars.



Photo: [Happyvalley.org.uk](http://Happyvalley.org.uk)

High Street

## What we look like today

Are we a large village or small town? The debate has been raging on Facebook, and passions run high.

Our local government office gently suggests that we could describe our parish as a small town, with the character of a large village. In any case, there is a Town Council in the Town Hall.

Our population is currently about 7,900, which is up by 8% on just ten years ago. About 10% of us move home every year, some of that within Bollington itself.

Roughly speaking, most of us are aged between 16 and 65 (just over 60%). Our children number just under 20%, and our older folk also number just under 20%.

Ethnically, we are 98% white, with 0.2 per cent black, and 0.7% mixed multiple.

Most of us own our homes (74%). Quite a few of us rent privately (nearly 20%).

We have four primary schools in Bollington. They are: Bollington Cross CE (Voluntary Controlled) Primary; St John's CE (Voluntary Aided) Primary; St Gregory's Roman Catholic Primary; and Dean Valley Community Primary. There are also four preschool groups.

We have Air Cadets, Sea Cadets, Fire Cadets, Scouts, Cubs, Brownies and Rainbows.



We have an excellent medical practice at Bollington Medical Centre, which also offers physio. There is a Rowlands pharmacy on site.

We have a Post Office, a Library, a newsagent, a florist, two butchers, two bakers, a delicatessen a laundrette and a Co-op. A small Tesco's is on the way.

We have two care homes and one supported retirement housing.



Photo: Wikimedia Commons.

*The Adelphi Mill*

We have two very active and engaged community centres.

Though of course nowadays the cotton spinning is long gone, several of the mills still remain. They provide characterful premises to dozens of small businesses, which range from IT to pharmaceutical, from silk printing to the financial sector.

Bollington's hundreds of early Victorian stone cottages no longer house the large families of industrial workers. Now they are modernised and highly valued by singles and young couples.

## There is lots to do in Bollington (*in normal times*)

### Enjoy the scenery

The Macclesfield canal runs through Bollington – you can hire a boat or walk the towpath.

The picturesque Middlewood Way follows the line of the former Macclesfield, Bollington and Marple Railway, and runs for nine miles. Perfect for walking and cycling!

The beautiful Peak District National Park is only a 15-minute drive away.



Photo: Bollington t-c.gov.uk

*Macclesfield Canal*

### Enjoy the culture

Our Arts Centre hosts exhibitions, concerts, plays, comedy acts, and occasional opera evenings. The Bollington Festival is held every four years and attracts national names. Our Festival Choir meets here on a weekly basis, and we have an award-winning Brass Band. We also run our own local radio station – Canalside, from the Clarence Mill. And there is much more!

## Keep fit

We have Bollington Leisure Centre (with swimming pool and many exercise classes); more classes in the Civic Hall, a Cricket Club; a Bowling Club; a local football team (for youngsters); and an Annual Walking Festival, to name but some activities.

For keen gardeners, we have a Horticultural Society.

## Dine out

Bollington is famous for its pubs, and even has an award-winning local brewery. It also has a selection of highly rated restaurants.

## You can get anywhere from here

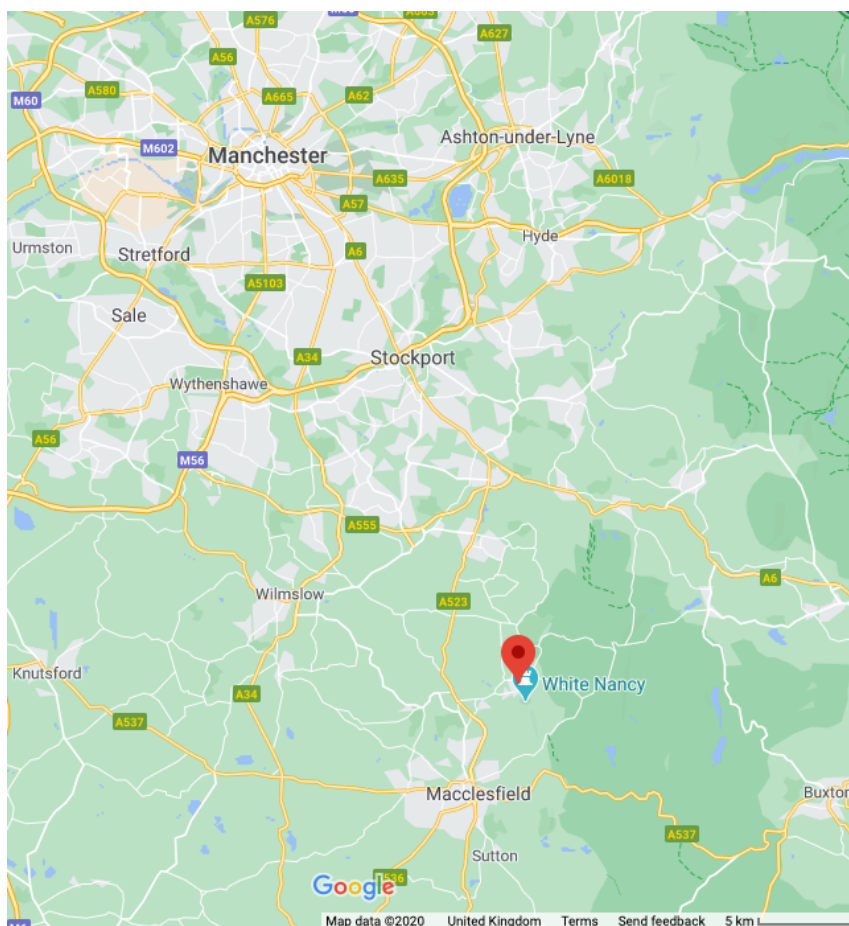
We are seven minutes from Macclesfield Train Station, with direct routes to Manchester, London, Birmingham and the South Coast. We are about 20 minutes by train to Manchester, where you can catch trains to the North.

We are half an hour from the M6, either exit 17 (Sandbach and Congleton) or exit 18 (Holmes Chapel, Chester). We are an hour from Chester, an hour and a half from the Lake District, and two hours from Anglesey.

We are 20 minutes from Manchester International Airport.

## Find out more

Learn more about Bollington at  
<https://happyvalley.org.uk>



*Bollington – north of Macclesfield, south of Manchester*



## About us

St Oswald's is informal and very friendly. Our tradition has been described as a blend of Liberal Catholic and Middle-of-the-Road.

Our 2019 electoral roll numbers 115, but on a typical Sunday we are about 59 adults and nine children. We span all age groups, but most of us are over 50, and many of us are women.



*Our music group*

Most of us live in the parish, though a few of us live in nearby Tytherington or Macclesfield.

St Oswald's is a strong family, built on established relationships that in some cases go back to our schooldays. We really do care about each other, and so enjoy spending time together. Our support for each other comes from the heart, and it is often deeply practical.

We also care about our local community, and in recent years we have been glad to invest some significant effort and resources into expanding our ministry to children, young people and the older generation.



*Helping with Christingle*



*We enjoy being together!*



*Hilary and Christine (Church Wardens), Anne and Brian (Readers)*

## Our church team

Our two Church Wardens, Christine and Hilary, are highly dedicated and well supported by our PCC. They did an amazing job in keeping us going throughout last year's pandemic.

Our licensed (but unpaid) Children and Young Families worker, Bev, has pioneered and established our extensive children's work in the parish.

Our two Readers, Brian and Anne, have preached on a regular basis and supported the vicar in various parish initiatives.

Our Growth Action Plan (GAP) Co-ordinator, Maggie, has led a team which works hard to deliver numerous social and fund-raising events each year. These are always well attended.

Our Webmaster has built an excellent and well-stocked church website, which is often 'liked' in Bollington.

Our Choir Leader heads up a small but dedicated choir who help with Sunday worship. We even have a small but talented music group who play flutes and violins at some services. We know we are blessed to have three excellent organists.

*Anthea (Choir Leader) Bev (Children)*

*Julie (PCC Sec)*

*Maggie (GAP) Richard (PCC Treas)*





## Our church building

St Oswald's, which has been described as 'a gem of Arts and Crafts architecture', was built in 1907 and consecrated in 1908. It is in good shape, with no urgent work needed.

The last quinquennial inspection was May 2016; the next one will be in 2021 (postponed from 2020 because of Covid-19).

St Oswald's is now the designated parish church of Bollington, following the closure of St John's, the original parish church, in 2003. Holy Trinity Kerridge, a mission church of St John's, closed in 2009

In 1999 a tiny kitchen was installed in the middle of the back of the church. In 2008 the 100-year-old chairs were replaced with comfortable modern chairs. About this time also, a sound-system was installed, which includes a loop system.

In 2012 the church council added a new entrance porch, three toilets and a large storage cupboard. It was paid for from the proceeds of the sale of Holy Trinity Kerridge. In 2014 the large mosaic on the wall just outside the church was completed. It had involved 850 people from across the parish, overseen by a local artist. It was paid for anonymously.

Late last year we completed a new, larger, kitchen, installing it in the old porch at the back of the church. It releases a lot of space at the back of the church, and will also give us ample opportunity to offer better hospitality to both our church family and members of the wider community. We funded it through fund-raising activity, part of the sale of the old vicarage, donations and grants.



*New entrance hall and mosaic*



*Looking towards the sanctuary*



*Our new kitchen*

## Our church services

Our regular pattern of worship is as follows:

### Weekly services

1st Sunday - 9:15am Holy Communion and 10.30am Family Worship

3rd Sunday - 10:30am Family Communion

Other Sundays - 10:30am Parish Communion

Thursdays - 10.30 Holy Communion

We use Common Worship, and our hymn books are Anglican Hymns Old and New.

The vicar has traditionally worn eucharistic vestments and coloured stoles.

### Other services

Baptism, weddings, funerals and confirmations.

Last year we:

- baptised two children (seven more are waiting)
- conducted two weddings
- held three funerals at the church, and 15 more at the crematorium in Macclesfield

There were no candidates for Confirmation.

### Services in the community

A regular monthly Holy Communion service is held at both of our local nursing homes.

The vicar is also a visible and valued presence at the war memorials in Bollington and Kerridge at the annual services to commemorate the fallen.



*Story time at Family Worship*



*Lighting the Advent Candle*



*A great place to get married!*



### Our Seasonal services and events include:

- Epiphany Party (for children)
- Taize Worship (as an Evensong)
- Holy Week and Easter services
- Pet Blessing Service
- Autumn Fair, our major annual fund-raiser
- Harvest Festival
- All Hallows Eve Light Party (for children)
- Remembrance Day Service
- All Souls Service (remembering lost loved ones)
- Christmas services



*The llama who came to visit*

### Discipleship and lay ministry

Our lay leadership is strong, owing to a number of dedicated church members whose shared vision is to help nurture and grow our church family. One of our readers helps lead the Thursday morning service at church. The other reader leads our monthly prayer meeting.

Our enthusiastic children's ministry worker leads the Children's Ministry Team in providing support and encouragement to young families and youth in the parish.

Jean, a church member, runs our weekly Faith Hour.

We nurture our discipleship with:

- An annual Lent group
- An annual Advent group
- CHUB outings (Church and Pub visit combined)
- An occasional Quiet Day, held in the church or at Fox Hill, our diocesan retreat centre
- The Cursillo 4th Day Community, which meets monthly in our church. Several of our church family are members.
- A parish retreat has been held at Fox Hill.



*After Family Worship*

## Outreach and mission and follow-up

### In our parish

#### Children and young people



*The RICH group*

We host a Tuesday morning 'Praise and Play' group for about 22 pre-school children and their parents.

We host a Thursday afternoon after-school RICH (Refreshment in Church) group for about 25 young people, aged 11 to 14 (Years 7,8 and 9).

All baptised children are followed up, through being invited to the annual Epiphany Party.

#### The elderly

The vicar takes monthly Holy Communion services at our local care homes, Ingersley Court and Mount Hall. Within the congregation, we organise occasional home visiting and on-going practical care.

#### The bereaved

Families of the bereaved are invited to join the congregation at the All Souls Service. The vicar makes clear that she is available for additional support, if needed.

#### Those in need

We donate to the food collection centre for Hope in East Cheshire, based in Macclesfield.

We support Homeless in East Cheshire (WHAM) at the local winter homeless shelters.

### Beyond our parish

In the UK, we raise funds for specific charities chosen by the PCC. These include Macmillan nurses and Crisis at Christmas.

#### Overseas

We have supported Water Aid, Action Aid and Christian Aid through collections, and coffee mornings and breakfasts.





*Bollington Cross CE Primary School*



*St John's CE Primary School*

## Church education and social provision

We have two church schools in the parish:

Bollington Cross CE (Voluntary Controlled) Primary (174 pupils)

St John's CE (Voluntary Aided) Primary (108 pupils)

Both schools operate on strong Christian values, and both have excellent links with our church. Both schools are growing.

The vicar is a governor of both church schools.

The vicar regularly visits both schools, and the children in both schools regularly visit the church. They attend Holy Communion on a Thursday morning, participate in the annual School Experience Week held in church, and take part in both our Christingle Service and our Christmas Eve Nativity Service.

## Involvement in the community

The vicar may be invited to act as the Mayor's Chaplain.

There is a Remembrance Parade at Kerridge War Memorial in July.

On Remembrance Day we join the community for the Two Minute Silence at the Cenotaph.

Our 'social' church events are always advertised, by Facebook and by posters, in Bollington. The local shops, community centre, leisure centre, library and post office will display our posters.

On two occasions the church has opened to the community to provide a quiet space for solace and prayer. Each time, it followed the premature death of a local teacher which had left a number of families grieving.

During the Bollington Festival (held every four years) we open the church for various events and, as a church, join in the festival parade.

Overall, we find that our church is well regarded in Bollington and seen as integral to our community.

*On parade through  
Bollington!*



## Finance

Throughout 2020, we have managed to pay our full parish share of £67,624 for the year. However, due to the late recovery of Gift Aid and VAT on the kitchen project, there will be a deficit of around £7000 at the end of the year. This is in line with the deficits recorded in the previous three years. Unrestricted reserves currently stand at just under £18,000, but are awaiting the claims of Gift Aid and VAT.

Our ordinary income is just under £60,000 per year and this is almost entirely from our worshipping congregation whose regular giving averages about £8 per week. We take a collection in our Sunday service and there is a plate at the door for the Thursday service. We encourage planned giving through standing orders.

In 2018 we launched a Friends of St Oswald's scheme to encourage our local community to help us keep the church building going - for everyone's sake. The scheme has met with some success across Bollington, and currently raises another £1800 each year.

We have a charity reference number with HMRC and have recently completed a re-declaration of compliance with The Pensions Regulator.

Like many parishes, we face our financial future with caution knowing that we have challenges ahead to ensure that we have the firm financial footing from which to support our Christian witness in our community.



## Our churchyard

There is a churchyard at St John's, our original parish church. The churchyard is closed for new burials, but there is an open Columbarium for the internment of ashes. We are responsible for the maintenance of the churchyard, as due to current legislation we have been unable to transfer its maintenance to the Local Authority.

## Our vicarage



*Front of house*

Our vicarage is situated on a quiet cul de sac in the recently completed Waterhouse Mill development, which lies in the middle of Bollington.

It is a four-bedroom detached modern house less than five years old. It is in superb condition, and even boasts an electric charging point in the garage.



*The patio and garden*

## Church representation

Richard, our PCC Treasurer, is Lay Chair of Macclesfield Deanery Synod, and we have three other representatives as well.

Two members of our church are on Chester Diocesan Synod.

We are an active member of Hope in NE Cheshire, which consists of 39 churches working together in mission to their communities. We also have friendly informal links with the other churches in Bollington (Roman Catholic, New Life, and URC).

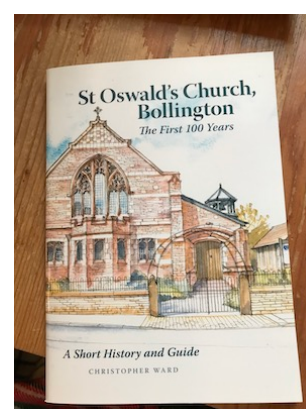
## Publications

We have a very active Facebook page, followed by more than 450 people.

We have a well-used and well-stocked website at <https://stoswaldbollington.org.uk>.

A member of our church, Chris, has written an excellent history of the church and parish.

Our monthly church magazine has a circulation of about 250 and is also uploaded onto our website.





## Our commitment to you

We are a loving church and support each other practically and spiritually. Our new vicar can expect the same support, and a relationship based on trust and love. We hope, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to be in an active partnership with our vicar.

We will respect your need for private time and recreation. We will also encourage you to take time to develop your own spiritual life, study and ministry.



*We will make you welcome!*

## Our vision for the parish

After the isolation of Covid-19, we want very much to re-establish ourselves as a caring, energetic church family with links throughout the wider community of Bollington.

We want to deepen our relationship with God, and to grow in our understanding of the amazing love that Jesus Christ has for us. By the power of his Holy Spirit, we want to reflect His grace in our lives, and to take opportunities to witness to Him in our community.

We know that our spirituality will deepen only as we spend time with God in prayer and worship, in reading his Word, and in passing on His love to others.



*We want to be here for our community*

## Our next vicar

We are looking for a vicar with a deep Christian faith, who is a warm, approachable 'people person'. Our new vicar will be down-to-earth, with a good sense of humour.

We have a warm and close-knit church family. Our new vicar will understand the importance of listening and will relate sensitively to people, being willing to give time to pastoral care.

We are blessed with a committed lay team. Our new vicar will foster the team, encourage their involvement, and nurture any new emerging leaders.

We have two church schools. Our new vicar will enjoy spending time with children and will be able to talk to them in a child-friendly manner. Our new vicar will understand the role of a governor and the importance of the links between the school, church and community.

We have a good community spirit in Bollington. The new incumbent will be comfortable engaging with the wide variety of people in our numerous civic organisations, and will encourage us to do the same.

Finally, Paul urged Timothy to "set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity... devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching. Do not neglect your gift, which was given you..."\* We would welcome someone with similar pastoral gifts as Timothy had, whose spirituality and biblical knowledge can inspire and stimulate our whole congregation in our individual Christian journeys.

\*(1 Timothy 4:12 -14)



*View from the altar*



*Finally, here are some scenes of life at St Oswald's*





