

The United Benefice of



St Peter's

Leighton-cum-Minshull Vernon
and St Leonard's Warmingham



Parish Profile 2022

St Peter's Church
Middlewich Road, Minshull Vernon,
Crewe CW1 4RD



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Chester



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Introduction

St. Peter's Church is situated to the north-west of Crewe on Middlewich Road, Minshull Vernon, Cheshire, one mile from Leighton Hospital. It is an active Anglican parish church in the deanery of Nantwich, the archdeaconry of Macclesfield, and the diocese of Chester. The benefice is combined with that of St. Leonard, Warmingham.



Most services are conducted by the Vicar. In recent times our local ordinand in training has taken regular services.

St. Peter's is a delightful country church set in the glorious Cheshire countryside. The church was consecrated on 12th December 1849 and both church and churchyard are very pleasing to the eye.

The church, built in Gothic style, is a Grade II listed building. It consists of a north porch, nave, chancel and priest's vestry. An extension general purpose room was added in 1966. The pews are original. Stained glass windows have been fitted over the years in memory of loved ones. All are of the Victorian period.

The church building is in a good state of repair. The roof was replaced in 2004.

There have been significant upgrades in lighting, heating and décor, and the general purpose room has undergone a total face-lift (and was re-dedicated by Bishop Peter in 2016 on the fiftieth Anniversary of its construction).



The church has a warmth and intimacy along with a faithful congregation with a friendly atmosphere who worship in a central Anglican tradition. We are inclusive and accessible, with up-to-date facilities for disabled people, a loop for the hard of hearing, toilets and baby-changing facilities (in the hall). We also have plenty of car-parking.

The new graveyard was consecrated in 2018 and has capacity for the foreseeable future with further land available which could be consecrated.

This was a huge project requiring reordering of access for the former vicarage, major landscaping, obtaining planning consents, etc.

The intention is that this beautiful park-like area should be as much for the living as the dead (wild flower area, pond, etc).

There has been a plan to reveal a section of the Roman Road which runs through part of the extension.

The church originally served a rural population. A great deal of new housing has been built in the parish with more planned for the future.

Thus nowadays the parish population is predominantly urban, though we retain significant rural links which are cherished by all. The parish serves as a meeting point for town and country.

The Parish has worked closely with the local Methodist Church (on Bradfield Road). We have shared the cost of an Outreach Worker, based on their premises, in the belief that their location has local strategic advantages. (We also have been part of the Methodist Lent lunches).

Up until its closure in 2021 we had a friendly relationship with the local URC chapel.

The Parish has also contributed significantly to the cost of a Community Development Officer across parishes in the central part of Crewe.

We raise money for Christian Aid, Mission to Seafarers, The Children's Society, the County Agricultural Chaplaincy. We have responded to local and international relief appeals.



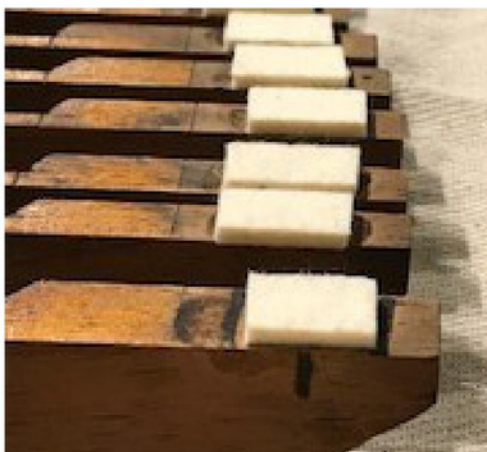
The Organ

The organ was overhauled in the Autumn of 2020 at a cost of £14,000. It was moved to its present position in the north transept in 1913 and the last significant upgrade was more than forty years ago.

During the work, we overhauled the Pedal Bourdon chest, re-leathering the small primary action motors and the internal power motors. These were last done in 1980 according to the signature in the chest from Cliff Walley. He worked for Charles Whiteley, who looked after the organ before they were bought by Hill Norman & Beard.

We also changed all of the leather regulation buttons and cloths. These are on threaded wires so they can be moved to regulate key depth, and all couplers. These were original and date back to around 1880 when the organ was built. In total we changed around 1,100 regulation buttons and 2,000 cloths.

The felt under the keys and pedals was also replaced with new.



The Choir

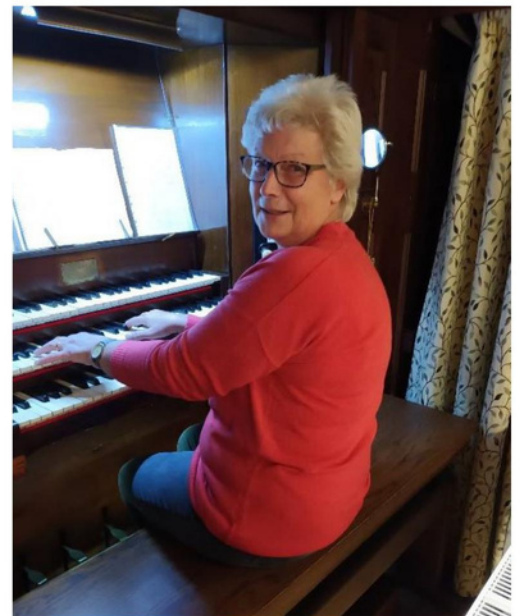


The Choir meets for choir practice on Thursday evenings from 7.30pm to 8.30pm. We have nine adult female members, one junior female member and three adult male choir members.

Ruth, our Church Organist, also joins the choristers for special items.

Some of the choir members have been part of St. Peter's Choir since the 1950's and are still regular attenders.

The choir sings at two services each Sunday, with the majority of members available on a Sunday morning. Three or four members sing at Evensong. The choir members enjoy meeting for their weekly choir practice, which is a social meeting too, with laughter and banter. We celebrate birthdays and special occasions of choir members with soft drinks and light refreshments following choir practice.



Our Existing Structure and Vision for the future

St. Peter's holds a central Anglican tradition. Our vision is to use our tradition and resources to grow Christ's Kingdom in this place. Our church attendance figures are but one measure of what we seek to achieve. Our three services on most Sundays offer a variety of worship styles to suit a variety of tastes.

Electoral Roll: 121

Usual Sunday attendance across three services: Fifty-nine (sixteen years of age and over – 3 under sixteen).

Our Parish

The parish of Leighton-cum-Minshull Vernon comprises a varied mix of residential dwellings, mainly on modern estates, and a dwindling agricultural community. Population 6660 (according to the 2011 Census – now much increased).

There are several local shops and two public houses. There is a large thriving primary school , a major District Hospital and a popular Garden Centre.

Sunday Services

Before the vacancy the following was the pattern of services:

9.00am Holy Communion

Said service of Holy Communion from the Book of Common Prayer (except on the last Sunday of the month when the incumbent takes said Holy Communion at 9.00am at St. Leonard's, Warmingham).

10.30am Sunday School

Held in the Community Hall on 2nd and 4th Sundays during term-time.

10.45am Holy Communion every Sunday with the first Sunday of each month being a Family Service which is relatively informal, and has sometimes involved the choir from Mablins Lane School or an ensemble from a local Band.

This is our main Sunday service which attracts the largest congregation of about thirty-five worshippers. On the third Sunday of the month this service is sometimes a lay-led, non-Eucharistic service of the word. (Incumbent takes Holy Communion service at St. Leonard's along with a baptism during the service if required).

Tea and coffee is served every Sunday after the 10.45am service, also on special occasions.





A Sunday morning service in the sunshine.

7.00pm Evensong

Sung Evensong from the Book of Common Prayer. On the last Sunday of the month this is followed by a short service of Holy Communion.

Average attendance fifteen.

Maisie
A regular at
Evensong



Occasional Services

We have approximately forty baptisms a year (mostly on a Sunday afternoon). A few baptisms have taken place in the main service on a Sunday, but because of the size of the church relative to the size of Baptism families this can be difficult, however desirable it may be. We have about ten weddings a year and eight funerals. All these services provide vital links to the people of the parish.

The church worship tradition is considered central. Hymns Old and New is the hymn book used. The customary vesture for clergy is alb and stole for the Eucharist, and choir dress on other occasions. Plough service, Remembrance of Lost Loved Ones, Sea Sunday and Rogation are some of the regular special services which have been held in recent years as well as a special service for those who have lost babies which is held in conjunction with Leighton Hospital which is within the bounds of the parish.

There have been occasional 'Songs of Praise', 'St. Peter's Got Talent', World Mental Health Day, Flower Festival and special Dedication Services. We usually have held a bi-annual Confirmation Service.

The worship of the church is greatly enhanced by the dedicated church choir and organist. Weekly practices are the norm. Anthems are part of the choir's repertoire with such favourites as 'Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring', 'The Holy City' and 'The Hallelujah Chorus'. While the organ provides the usual accompaniment, we occasionally sing to wind instruments or a guitar.

Finances

These are in good health by virtue of a generous legacy from the Tomkinson family some years ago. The Parochial Church Council (PCC) have made wise investment decisions, aided by our financial advisor, and comprise a well performing investment fund and two rental properties in Church Minshull. Our accounts are examined each year by WR Partners, and although they have not yet been approved by the APCM, for the year ending 31/12/21 our total income was £38,400, which includes the rental income of course.

We have supported many local community initiatives, like the Restore Crewe Project, the Youth Worker for the Methodists, the Community Development Officer based at St. Andrew's, as well as supporting our sister church St. Leonard's.

We have £10,000 "invested" in the West Cheshire Credit Union and hold many fund-raising social events like the Flower Festival and the Burns Supper to build on our good local relationships. Expenses for the year totalled £90,000 with the deficit being covered by our investment fund. The major expenses are our Parish Share at £48,767, insurance at £1500 per year, and heat and light also at £1500.

Fabric

This is in excellent order following a series of major upgrades. The choir vestry, added to St. Peter's in 1966, was re-dedicated by the Bishop of Chester fifty years later, following major work fitting new cupboards, wardrobes, and carpet for the use of our splendid choir.



At the same time Bishop Peter also dedicated our recently installed stained glass windows; all seven were from a redundant church in Rochdale and only added more splendour to our Victorian gem. A major lighting upgrade has also lifted the ambience, especially once our glorious internal

roof trusses were also illuminated as part of the scheme.

The new oil boiler and fuel tank, care of a generous donation, and changes to the internal pipework have recently upgraded our heating system and the "Listed Places of Worship Grant" from the Department for Culture, Media, and Sport has allowed us to claim back all the Value Added Tax.

The new roof in 2004, the total internal redecoration, the installation of various accessibility features and the new sound loop system ends our expenditure on the fabric at St. Peter's for now, but leaves us with a building in pristine condition, ready for the next chapter in our history.



A typical year in the life of St. Peter's (services and associated social events)

January Burns Night Supper in the Hall following 6pm Evensong

February Plough Service followed by Supper in the Hall

March Lent Lunches start weekly at Coppenhall Methodist Church



April Easter, drawing, painting and colouring competition
Easter Egg Hunt followed by refreshments
Charity Fayre / Coffee Morning at Nantwich Parish Hall
Remembrance Service for Lost Loved Ones in the Churchyard followed by refreshments

May Warmingham Wakes, St. Leonard's

June Pet Service at St. Leonard's
Vintage Tea Party
Confirmation Service at St. Peter's followed by refreshments

July Summer concert and barbecue either at the Hall or a local homestead

August Re-charge batteries!

September Harvest Service followed by supper in the Hall

October Charity Fayre / Coffee Morning at Nantwich Parish Hall

November Remembrance Service at Bradfield Green
Remembrance Service for Lost Loved Ones followed by refreshments
Christmas Flower Demonstration (mulled wine/mince pies)

December Visit by St Nicholas to the Church/Hall with collection of presents for The Salvation Army. Invite Mablings Lane School to sing during the service.
Brass Band Concert
Nine Lessons and Carols (sherry/shortbread)
Three Christingle Services on Christmas Eve



Social Committee



When the church puts on a special event, the team on the social committee will organise the catering/refreshments, usually in the community hall, with the help of willing volunteers.

Church Magazine Church Window

There is a joint magazine produced for the two parishes of the United Benefice. This is edited and printed in-house (copies produced approx. three hundred and eighty per month). The magazine is distributed free.

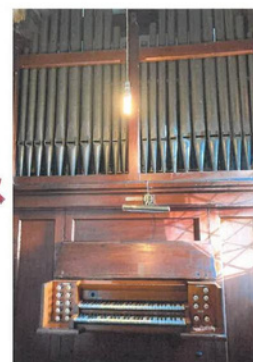
Together with the website, it is a significant part of the communication and outreach of the Parish.

Church Window The magazine for the parishes of

St. Peter's
Leighton-cum-Minshull Vernon



&



St. Leonard's
Warmingham

"So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." *Isaiah 41:10*

Keep Safe - Keep Well
February 2022

Sunday School



Sunday school is normally held in the community hall on the second and fourth Sundays of the month during term time. Numbers have dwindled in recent years. The very successful “Saturday Church” (a version of Messy Church) in the parish of Warmingham has been considered in the past as a model for moving forward.

Safeguarding

We continue with safeguarding principles and measures to promote and build a good safeguarding practice.

At each meeting the Safeguarding Officer has used the opportunity to raise awareness of many specific areas and knowledge of safeguarding eg. what is abuse and neglect of children? What is abuse of vulnerable adults or the elderly?

We continually promote a safer culture and safeguarding practice at St. Peters Church.

In a recent year we have been required by the national church to check through our records of many years for any past incidents from a safeguarding point of view. A notice was placed in the church magazine regarding this.

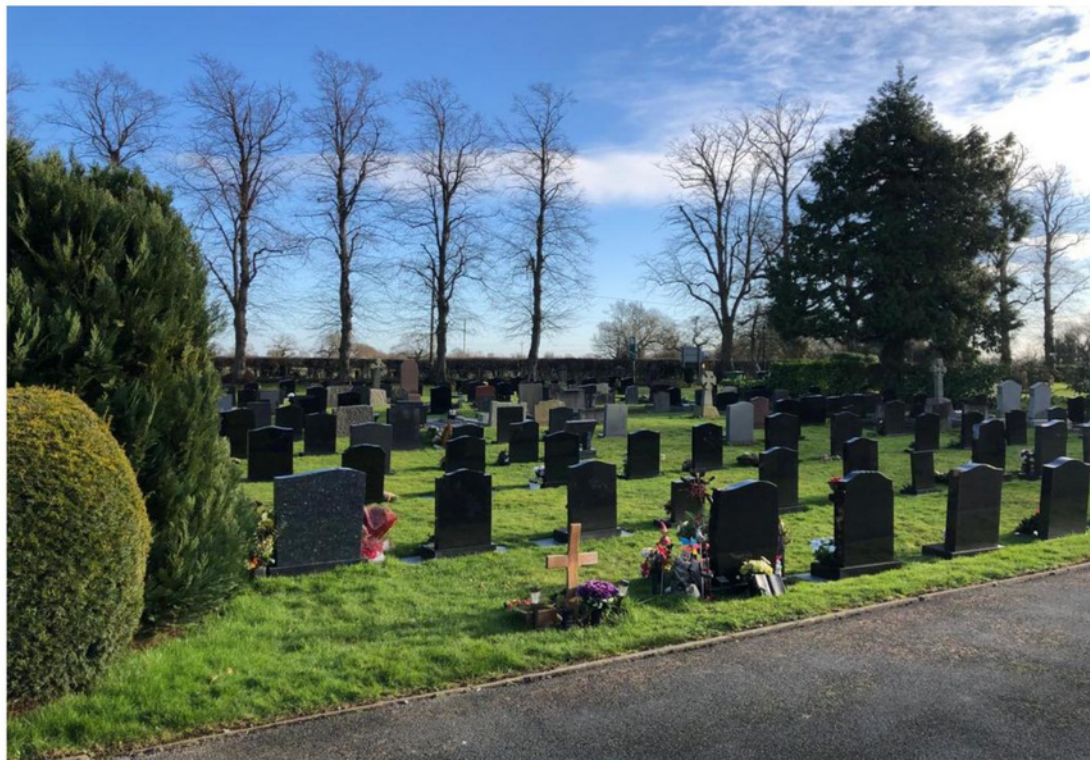
Safeguarding is part of our core faith and an integral feature of Christian life in our church.

Churchyard and Car Park

After a very extensive enlargement of our graveyard facility in 2018, which required reordering of the access to the former vicarage, major landscaping including a balancing pond and a new church car park; all of which needed planning consent, we pride ourselves in now having such a tranquil park like area, next to the busy A530, where we can remember loved ones.

The churchyard maintenance is put out to tender each year and our present successful contractors are John Harding & Son who try to keep a sympathetic balance between

tidiness and wildlife, not an easy task especially when there are so many different points of view to manage. From the primroses and “Ice Follies” narcissus in the Spring to the wildflowers and shrubs throughout the rest of the year, it is a haven for birds, wildlife and the odd human and we cherish it greatly, as we sit on the benches given in memory of loved ones.



St. Peter's Community Hall



St. Peter's has a modern, well appointed Community Hall (built 2010) within the Church precincts which is well used by outside groups and generates an income through bookings. A number of the bookings come from baptism and birthday parties.

It is seen as a major point of contact with the community. For example, we sponsored a 'Stay and Play' session every week (pre-Covid). We allow free use by the (Civil) Parish Council. The hall has been in regular use by music groups, dance groups, charitable groups and art groups.





The hall is reserved for the church to use on a Sunday morning for tea, coffee and fellowship plus social events throughout the year.

The hall has a seating capacity of about sixty, but over a hundred if people are standing.

There is ample car parking space available for baptisms, funerals, weddings and social events.

The hall is administered by a committee and managed by a team on a day-to-day basis.

It has financial reserves of over £20,000. There is an aim to put this towards an extension to the hall.



Members of the
congregation
Thursday Table
Tennis in the Hall

Community Policing Team

We are very fortunate that the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire has introduced a local community policing team for Leighton, consequently PC Louis Martin and PCSO Matt Oliver hold regular surgeries in the Community Hall, which they use as their base. The increase in a visible police presence re-assures parishioners and has added greatly to our feeling of well-being, although just as in many other parishes, the litter problem appears to be on the increase. Louis and Matt attend occasional services and functions and have become a welcome part of our church family.

Introducing your community policing team
for Leighton

PC 30073
Louis Martin

PCSO 23132
Matt Oliver

You will see us out and about in your area. Please come and talk to us at one of our regular surgeries at your **Police Community Base**.



John Dwyer
Police & Crime
Commissioner
for Cheshire

*Delivering an accessible police
service based in the heart of
your community.*



Leighton Police

LeightonPol

Our relationship with St. Leonard's

Since 2011 St. Peter's Minshull Vernon and St. Leonard's Warmingham have formed a united benefice. Prior to that, St. Leonard's was a United Benefice with St. Peter's, Elworth, and the incumbent at St. Peter's had a paid chaplaincy role at Leighton Hospital. While each parish has retained its own identity and integrity, and distinctive pattern of services, they have given support to the other, and goodwill between them abounds. For example, the St. Peter's Choir has sung for some services at St. Leonard's and social events have enjoyed support from the other parish. Personal friendships and families run across the two parishes. In theory, and in practice for the most part, 70% of the incumbent's time is allocated to St. Peter's and 30% to St. Leonard's. There would be further opportunities for collaboration in terms of human and material resources between the parishes.

The Vicarage



The joint parishes have the benefit of a large modern vicarage (built 1970) with an integral garage and extensive gardens, situated to the rear of the Community Hall at St. Peter's. It is well suited for any incumbent and besides two large reception rooms and a spacious office, it has a new kitchen, utility, and bathroom, courtesy of the Diocese. The four bedrooms are all light and airy, and a large outdoor patio area complements the accommodation. The recent internal decoration and new boundary fences, completed by the parishes, add further to this most desirable residence.





Rental Properties

1 and 2 Wades Green Cottages



Our two rental properties in Church Minshull, managed by Bespoke Lettings, provide us with a steady income stream, but as many of you already know with property ownership, besides the pluses of income, there are also the negatives of expenditure. At times, it can often feel never ending, and just trying to keep up with legislation alone these days can be very expensive. We are currently replacing the tired old garage at one, and upgrading the oil tank at the other, and when both are completed in the late Spring, it will surely enhance their values.

Leighton Hospital

Leighton Hospital, a major district hospital, is situated within the parish, a mile from the church. We have had very close links with the hospital. The incumbent has been a chaplain at the hospital available on a clergy rota within the deanery.

Beyond that, we hold an annual service in church for babies lost in the hospital, in the past we have held an annual service for lost loved ones in ICU, we have participated in events in the hospital chapel, and in the recent past ran a Listening course for interested parties in the hospital.

Mablins Lane School

A large community Primary School of over five hundred pupils, (rated “Good” by OFSTED) is situated centrally within the parish a mile and a half from the church. We have enjoyed outstanding links with the school. Their choir has sung in church on many occasions, for example. The vicar has been responsible for weekly Assemblies in the school, has been a long-term School Governor, and has participated in very many school events. The potential for fulfilling the mission of the church in the broadest sense in the school is considerable.

Local Businesses

The Parish is blessed with many local businesses; some set up as free-standing individual outlets and others developed as part of diversification projects on rural farms. Just outside the Parish boundary is the luxury car maker Bentley, where 3500 employees construct the new 4 x 4 Bentayga amongst others. Having recently celebrated their 75th Anniversary, they produce over eighty new luxury cars each day and provide our Parish with many employment opportunities.



At the Coach and Horses in Bradfield Green, good wholesome food and real ale are on offer on a regular basis. Successive proprietors have always supported the church and its social events, and even provided us with a churchwarden some years ago.

The Eight Farmers, although a distance from the church, is serving the local community.

Within the Parish is Minshulls Nursery; an extensive garden centre, food outlet and café that sells a wide range of plants and gardening accessories and is extremely busy all

through the year. The Grant's butcher's outlet within it has only added to its popularity amongst our parishioners, and the wider public.



The Spring Farm Business Centre in Moss Lane has converted redundant dairy farm buildings into nine luxurious offices; floristry and physiotherapy are just two of the wide arrays of businesses based there. Another farm building conversion, but in the Northern part of the parish, houses the Leather Suite Warehouse, where the smell from real leather sofas and oak furniture, only adds to their stunning visual display.

The farm shop at Hoolgrave Manor selling fresh milk, cheese, and dairy products, supplemented by a regular stall at various local Farmers Markets, again contributes further resources into the parish, and although not yet universally acclaimed by everyone, the Cheshire East Council's green waste recycling centre at Leighton Grange does provide the community with a modern first-class composting facility.



Are you called to be our new Vicar?

- We seek a prayerful priest from the central tradition of the church, faithful in the Ministry of the Word and Sacrament in its various forms, who lovingly supports the priestly ministry of the whole People of God, regardless of age, colour, gender or sexual orientation.
- A strong collaborative leader and team player with vision, empathy and humour. We hope that they would be committed to developing lay ministry in all its forms. We would be glad of a priest who would foster links and partnerships with local community organisations.
- An excellent communicator, preacher and teacher with sound administrative skills, who will develop pastoral ministry in conjunction with the laity.
- A determination to grow the church in numbers, mission and spirituality.
- Keen to involve Christians of all traditions and to foster the links with other traditions in the area.
- Keen to build a strong spiritual life for all, especially young people, and able and willing to be actively involved in the local primary school.
- Ecumenically minded, sympathetic to rural affairs.
- Be a confident leader, able to help us move forward and embrace new ideas.
- A “listening” leader who feels able to consult and sound out various views and opinions before acting.
- Keen to involve both Parishes in collaborative activities and worship with the aim of fostering closer fellowship and co-operation between our two congregations.



