

St Leonard's, Warmingham Parish Profile



2022

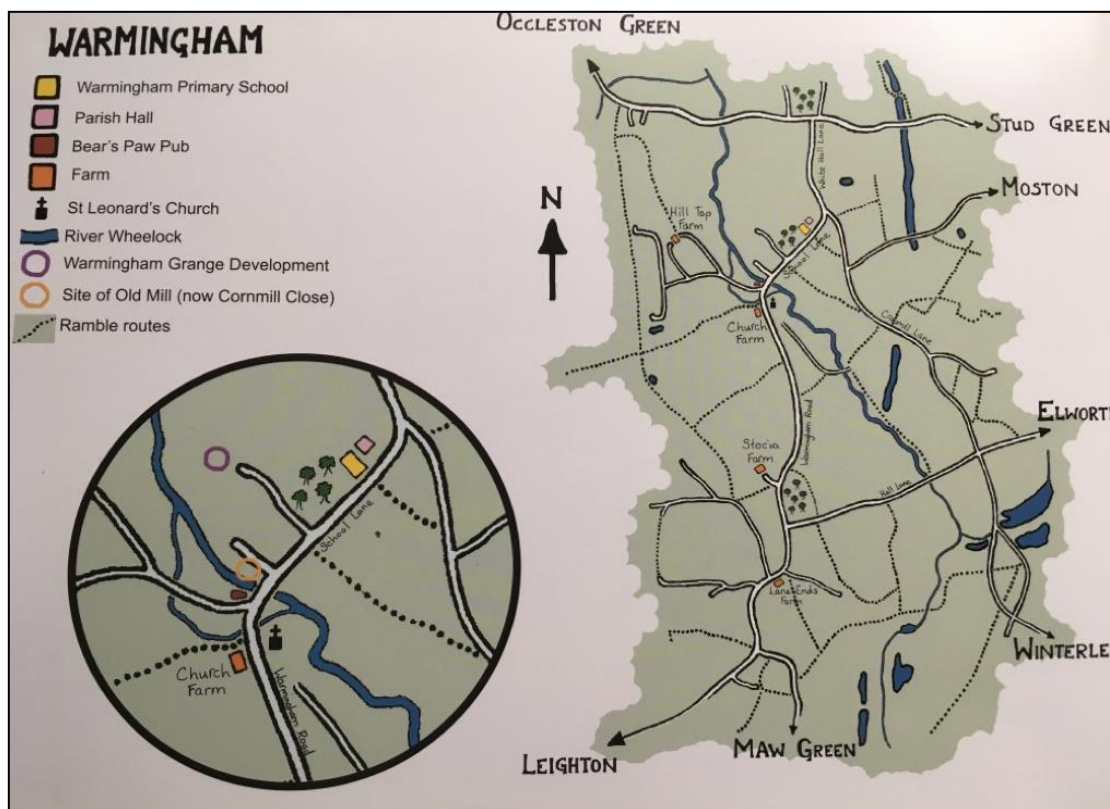
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Our Parish

The Parish of Warmingham comprises of Elton, Moston, Tetton and Warmingham. Warmingham itself is a (semi)rural village situated between Crewe, Sandbach and Middlewich, in close proximity to the A534 Crewe to Sandbach, the A530 Nantwich to Middlewich and the A533 Sandbach to Middlewich roads. Nearby Crewe train station provides an extensive railway network to the rest of the country, with trains to London running hourly and taking just over 2 ½ hours.

The church is located in the centre of Warmingham, opposite the very popular Bears Paw Country House Hotel and Restaurant dating back to the 19th Century. The pub underwent extensive refurbishment several years ago and the church enjoys a good relationship with the management, hosting several events attended by the congregation.



There are a number of countryside walks in and around Warmingham attracting visitors to the area. In the parish there are also two large fishing lakes; the Flash between Green Lane and Dragons Lane and the Moat on Oakwood Lane in Moston. These are owned by Elworth Angling Society and are very popular with anglers. There is also The Old Hough Fishery on Dragons Lane which has 10 pools available and caters for the disabled angler.

Warmingham C of E Aided primary school is half a mile from the church and next door to the village hall which was rebuilt in 2017 following successful lottery grants. The school is able to use the village hall facilities for assemblies.

Energy company eDF operates a large gas storage facility at Hill Top Farm, using the empty brine caverns that lie beneath much of the parish. British Salt continues to pump brine from underneath Warmingham to their plant in nearby Middlewich. eDF have had a longstanding

presence in the village and continue to be supportive of the church and local community, donating raffle prizes and money for community projects.

The population of the parish is approximately 649 people comprising of a mixture of retirees and families. A large proportion of this population is employed in the local farming and agricultural sector. A large housing development is currently being built in Moston ('Albion Lock'), comprising of a nursing home and 350 houses which will considerably increase the population of the parish. In 2021 Thornfield Green on Warmingham Lane comprising of approximately 50 homes is a new build of houses on the boundary of Moston / Middlewich.

The School

Warmingham C of E Aided Primary School dates back to 1839 and can accommodate 77 children. It is part of the Rural Church Schools Academy Trust bringing together three rural Church of England primary schools, Bunbury/Aldersey, St Oswald's Worleston and Warmingham. The present vicar has served as a school governor along with other church members. Once the children leave Warmingham Primary School there are a number of excellent high schools in the area which they can go on to, namely Sandbach High School and Sixth Form College, Sandbach Boys School, Middlewich High School, Holmes Chapel Comprehensive School, Sir William Stanier High School, Coppenhall.

The vicar / readers are involved in collective worship in school fortnightly. The school as a whole is welcomed to church four times a year, usually Harvest, Christmas, Easter and when the year 6 pupils are leaving to go on to high school. This is when the school children usually lead the service.

Warmingham Church of England School Charity

Following the sale of the school house several years ago a trust fund was established, the income from which is used for the benefit of the school. A committee of trustees administers the fund and the rector would be required to sit on this committee.

The Village Hall

The village hall was rebuilt in 2017 following successful lottery grants. The school pay for the use of the village hall during term time for assemblies and PE when the weather is inclement.

There are also various clubs run from the village hall; karate club, yoga club and Warmingham WI. The local rabbit club also hire the hall on a number of Sundays throughout the year for competitions. The hall is hired out for children's parties and other functions. The church holds their annual harvest supper in the village hall and also the Christmas lunch, along with other fundraising activities.

St Leonard's Church

"Poor Parish, Proud People - New Church, Old Steeple"

St Leonard's sits on a crown overlooking the River Wheelock. Worship has taken place here for at least seven centuries. The tower was built of handmade brick in 1715 and has had certain modifications to the belfry windows and battlements. 2007 witnessed the biggest building activity at St Leonard's since the current church was built in 1870. With a generous grant from English Heritage the roof was replaced. The church windows are some of the finest stained glass windows in the area and on a sunny day the colours are magnificent. Our church organ is in excellent condition although not played regularly.

In 2012 the Church was able to purchase the piece of land situated across the river opposite the Bears Paw following a legacy left by a parishioner. The field is now used for car parking on Sundays and for the Warmingham Wakes and other events throughout the year. At extremely busy periods at the Bears Paw, the field has been used for patron car parking, particularly at Christmas.

Ministry Team

The ministry team shared with St Peter's, Leighton-cum-Minshull Vernon comprises:

- The Vicar
- 2 Readers, Helan Isherwood, Steve Coppenhall,

The rest of the team

- 2 Church Wardens; Mike Sant, Janet Furber
- 15 PCC Members with various duties, i.e. safeguarding officer, flower rota, cleaning rota, sidesperson rota
- 15 sidespersons

Saturday Children's Church

"Saturday church" is a monthly children's group held in the village hall and run by our Reader Helan Isherwood and assisted by Elizabeth Morris. We usually have approximately 30 parents and children attending this monthly event, with craft activities and a short service following a theme being the usual format. Refreshments are served half way through the morning. Applicants for the primary school and those wishing to have their child baptised are encouraged to attend Saturday Church.

Home Group

The home group meets monthly on a Monday afternoon at the home of a parishioner.

Bell Ringers

The bell ringers meet on a Thursday evening. We sometimes have visiting bell ringing groups to ring a peel. The captain has worked hard to try and encourage young people to get involved in bell ringing, offering taster sessions occasionally.

Lent - Study course.

A Lent study course is held weekly in the village hall throughout lent and has been well attended by young and old alike. An ecumenical session in 5 lessons – Superstar (York course) was studied at the start of 2020. In 2021 the lent course was held by Zoom and this year we are “journeying through Lent with new daylight”. We support, jointly with St Peter’s Leighton-cum-Minshull Vernon, weekly Lent lunches held at Coppenhall Methodist Church.

Worship at St Leonard’s

A typical month of services at St Leonard’s comprise of the following:

| Day | Time | Service |
|------------------------------|--------|------------------|
| 1st Sunday | 1130am | Morning prayer |
| 2nd Sunday | 1130am | Family Service |
| 3rd Sunday | 1130am | Family Communion |
| Last Sunday of month | 0900am | Holy Communion |

The average weekly attendance at Church is 15, reflecting the relatively small population of the parish. For the special services as described below, the congregation can increase to upwards of 80 people, particularly the school services when the parents are invited to attend. After the death of our regular organist we now use CD music for hymns. On certain occasions we engage a visiting organist.

Special Services

Throughout the church calendar we hold a number of special services not only reflecting the Christian calendar but also the rural and farming nature of the parish. These include the Plough service in January, Wakes service (following the fete), Pet service in June, Lammas service in August, Harvest Service in September, Remembrance Service, Christingle Service and Carol service. Confirmation services usually take place in alternate years with St Peter’s. Children from the primary school are encouraged to be confirmed. St Peter’s church choir are invited to attend these services as are the Wakes Queen and her attendants.

Baptisms are usually held on the third Sunday of the month in conjunction with the family communion service but can be held at another time to suit the Vicar and family. In 2019 we had 15 baptisms; 7 weddings and 3 funerals.

Management of the Church

The management of the church is carried out by the PCC which consists of:

- The incumbent (chair)
- Church warden x 2
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Synod Representative
- Safeguarding Officer (as at 2022 Churchwardens due to vacancy)
- 10 PCC Members

Church Education

As previously said, we have a Saturday Children's Church held monthly in the village hall and led by one of our Readers. Although the parents of pre-school children are asked to bring their children along to Saturday church in order for them to gain a place at the primary school, however this is not compulsory. The family service is also aimed at younger families and although well received, it is acknowledged that attendance could be improved.

Over the last two years we have run a Lent course which has been well attended. All ages are welcome to attend and two of our high school age children attended this year and were very engaged in the meetings.

The Ministry team works with the school to support school collective worship and visits to St Leonard's.

Communication

We have a joint monthly magazine with St Peter's, Minshull Vernon called Church Window. This is distributed to as many parishioners as possible by volunteers. The magazine contains the dates of services, upcoming fundraising events, contact details, news from Warmingham primary school and anything else parishioners would like submitted. There is a page dedicated to Warmingham Village news.

The website www.warminghamchurch.weebly.com is updated regularly and contains the monthly services, contact details and other events. There is also a Facebook page with the same information as the website. We have found this a useful way to reach out to the wider community to advertise our events and receive many enquiries for weddings and baptisms through this platform. Throughout the Coronavirus pandemic the lay readers have prepared a service to be published to the website and Facebook page each week, aiming for parishioners to continue their worship.

Community

At St Leonard's we welcome all ages, visitors and new members to the area. We have had visitors from overseas staying at the Bears Paw Hotel attending our services. The Annual Wakes brings the church, school and wider community together and whenever there is a fundraising event, members of the parish attend and help out willingly. At present we are fortunate to have community service people maintaining the churchyard and have been doing so on a weekly basis since the easing of the pandemic restrictions. We have also been fortunate to have the church field and the river banks in the field maintained by local farmers on an ad hoc basis. The church cleaning duties and provision of altar flowers are organised by members of the congregation keen to donate their time to the church. Our Vicar has always been keen to visit the sick both in hospital and at home.

Warmingham Wakes

Warmingham Wakes is our annual fete held on the first Saturday in May. It is also our largest fundraising activity of the year. The Warmingham Wakes Queen is chosen at our Annual Duck Drive held in March each year. The Queen visits other local fetes throughout

the season representing Warmingham. The Wakes is held on the church field which we were able to purchase in 2012 and previously it was held in the garden of John and Elizabeth Richardson at Church House (opposite the church). The Wakes event is the first fete of the season and we have been fortunate to have an excellent attendance from the local area. It is a great community event bringing people together. Unfortunately, due to the Coronavirus pandemic we were unable to hold the Wakes in 2020 and 2021 and look forward to an excellent Wakes in 2022.

A year in the life of St. Leonard's

Outlined below is a typical year in the life of St Leonard's:

| Month | Service | Events |
|--------------------|--|--|
| January | Plough Service | |
| February | | Pancake Morning (FR) |
| March/April | Easter | Duck Drive (FR) |
| May | Wakes Service | Warmingham Wakes (FR) |
| June | Pet Service | |
| July | School Leavers Service | |
| August | Lammas Service | |
| September | Harvest Service | Community Walk (FR) |
| October | | Harvest Supper (FR) |
| November | Remembrance Sunday | Coffee Morning (FR) |
| December | Carol Service Christingle Service Nativity Service | Christmas Lunch Bears Paw Carol Singing |

(FR) = Fundraiser

Our relationship with St Peter's Leighton-cum – Minshull Vernon

We are fortunate to have a good relationship with St Peter's Church having only become a united benefice since September 2011. St Peter's Church choir visit us for our Harvest and Christmas services and we are also fortunate to have the St Peter's organist on hand for these services. Members of each parish enjoy visiting the other for events such as the Burns Night Supper at St Peter's.

Coronavirus Pandemic 2020/21

As with all churches across the country we have suffered financially due to the pandemic. We have been unable to hold our Annual Wakes event now for two years and this event is our main fundraiser. Although the church was closed twice due to the pandemic the number attending weekly services returned once we were allowed to reopen. The previous incumbent began weekly zoom services which parishioners found helpful. Unfortunately, we do have a proportion of senior parishioners who do not have the internet and were therefore unable to participate in these services. The churchwardens aimed to keep in touch with people by regular phone contact.

To try and increase church funds we managed to sell 1000 draw tickets for a Grand Christmas Raffle in December 2020 and just recently we held our Annual duck race which is usually held on the Wakes day and sold all 1000 ducks. This was held in conjunction with the Community walk and was finished off with afternoon tea in the village hall. This was our first fundraising event since the pandemic began and was well attended and we raised £1410.00.

Finances

Our bank position stands at £232,380 (January 2022) this includes our investments of £205,821 (valuation date January 2022). The cost of running the church is approximately £39,000 per annum. Our typical income is between £30,000-40,000 per annum.

Income from planned giving amounts to £8-10,000 per annum (including recovered gift aid). Other income is generated in the main from our annual fete the “Wakes” which generates typically after expenses in the region of £9000 per annum. However, due to Covid-19 the church was unable to host the annual Wakes for 2020 and 2021. We are planning 2022 and working with our community including Warmingham C of E Primary School., the village hall and our community. We also engage in other fund raising activities raising a further £2-3,000 per annum. The major expense is the Parish Share (£20,490 for 2021). Other costs include insurance £4846, heating and light £1350.

Outreach & Mission

Our church is noted for the friendliness of its welcome both to regular churchgoers but particularly to visitors and new members of the community. Much of the outreach comes from the many events described in this document, which are organised by members of the PCC and congregation.

This undoubtedly enhances the community spirit of sharing within the parish. People support one another in numerous small ways which further provides cohesion within the village and whilst there is no formal organisation of outreach and mission the fact that it happens is testimony to the philosophy of the Christian life.

Our Vicar worked hard to visit the sick both in hospital and at home (pre-pandemic) One area where outreach and mission could be strengthened is visiting by the incumbent. Informal visiting would make the presence of the church more known to those who are not regular church goers. Since the incumbent does not live in the village, visiting would help to bring the church to the wider population.

We would welcome the opportunity to attract and retain young families and recently married couples as members of the congregation. We feel that this could be done by further strengthening the link between the Church and Warmingham Primary School, and improving our communication and outreach following weddings, baptisms and confirmation services.

Are you called to be our new Vicar?

Are you enthusiastic, outgoing, a good communicator who can connect the Bible to everyday life in an imaginative way? Are you warm, compassionate and ready to listen? Are you willing to take a leadership role in the management and running of church affairs? Will you help us to build for a sustainable future? We set out below what we believe to be the key issues for development and growth. If you feel that you can help us, we'd love to hear from you.

- Encourage a wider participation in Lent and other bible related courses.
- Keen to involve Christians of all traditions and to foster links.
- To support and continue to encourage our Saturday Children's Church goers and baptism families to attend Sunday Family Services.
- The congregation of St Leonard's is getting older, so we would like to encourage you to help us draw families and younger people to join in the life of the church.

Qualities we are looking for:

- Experience of working in multi-parishes
- Experience of rural ministry
- A priest who lovingly supports the priestly ministry of the whole People of God, regardless of age, colour, gender or sexual orientation.
- Committed to lay ministry in all its forms. A priest who would foster links and partnerships with local community organisations.
- Communication skills able to allow the Church to modernise its outreach methods.
- Willingness to become involved in all aspects of Parish life including fundraising and wider community events.
- Readiness to engage frequently with Warmingham Primary School including the teachers, parents and governors.

We are supportive of the ministry of women at all levels in the Church (note that we have one female Reader).



Top: 'Blessing the plough' 2019.
 Right: Remembrance Window
 Left Warmingham Wakes
 Refreshment tent volunteers
 Bottom left: Warmingham
 Primary School