



Sharing God's Love;
Serving our Community;
Caring for Creation.

CANALSIDE BENEFICE PROFILE

January
2024

 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
DIOCESE OF SALISBURY



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A PRAYER FOR CANALSIDE

Loving God,
During this time without a Rector, we pray for our Benefice,
as we work together in unity to serve you in this place.
Help us to grow in faith, as we love one another and care for those in need.

Give us the strength to reach out to others,
and offer a warm welcome to all in our communities.

Guide us during this time,
as we discern your plans for our parishes,
and as we seek the person you want to join us as our new rector.

And may they know your heart,
as they are drawn to come and share their ministry with us.

May our future together,
in our villages, in our schools and in our churches
be filled with your Holy Spirit
as we make Jesus known
in our every aspect of our lives in Canalside.

Amen.



A MESSAGE FROM THE BISHOP OF RAMSBURY

Welcome!

Thank you for your interest in the post of Rector in the Canalside Benefice, part of the Ramsbury area of the Diocese of Salisbury. This post is a super opportunity for ministry in a beautiful part of Wiltshire, in a mission-minded and collaborative team of churches.

The ancient see of Ramsbury, covering much of that county, is rich in spiritual heritage, from the cathedral city of Salisbury and the valleys of its five rivers, up to the Marlborough Downs. God is in this place – even though many know it not – and it offers an enriching context for ministry and mission today.

I am looking for devoted and visionary clergy, who can inspire and guide our communities in Making Jesus Known - our new diocesan vision. While this can appear a timeless landscape, our parishes are constantly changing and face all the challenges and opportunities of life in the 2020s. Because of this, the church must also change in order to grow, renewing its traditions for the contemporary situation.

These are, then, times of transition for the market town and village churches of Wiltshire, which I sometimes liken to the oak trees of the Savernake Forest near my home, which gradually join their root systems to survive individually. Churches must likewise learn how to be collaborate 'beneath the soil' in order to flourish above ground in their own particular setting.

In the Diocese of Salisbury, we place a high value on the encouragement and pastoral support of our parish clergy and, should God guide you to serve here, you will become part of a committed and co-operative team.

Please contact the Ramsbury office if you need any assistance with your enquiry and be assured of my prayers as you seek the Lord's will for your future.

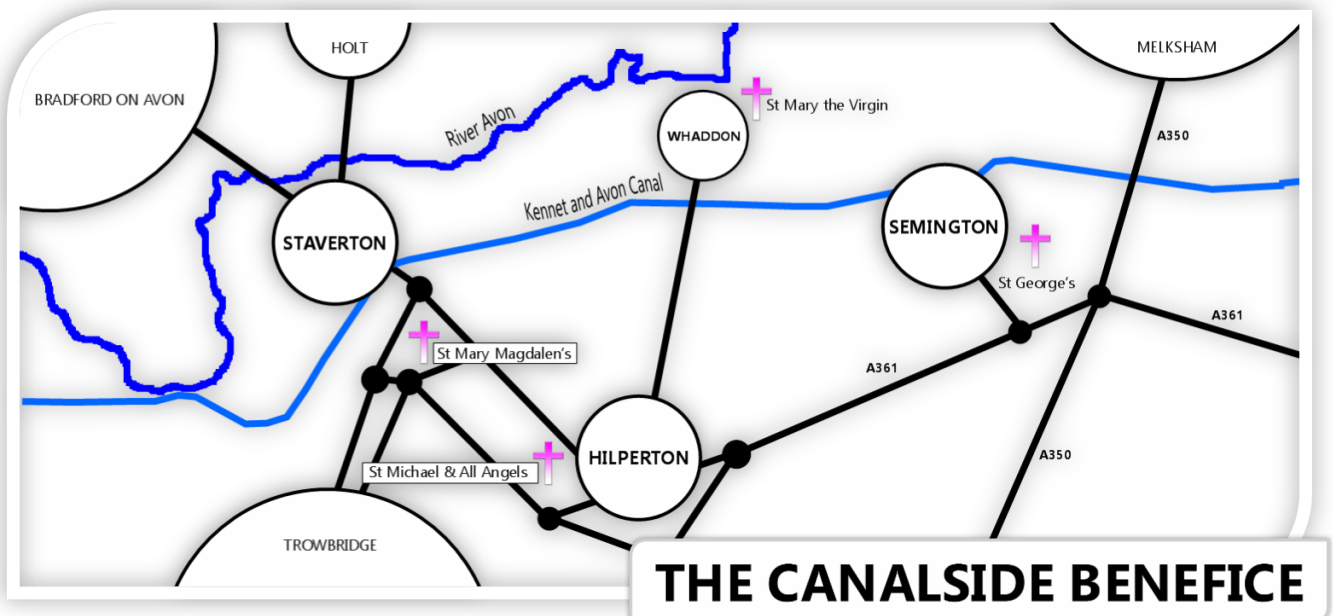
Sincerely in Christ,



WELCOME TO THE CANALSIDE BENEFICE

We are a friendly and welcoming group of four churches and communities all linked by the Kennet and Avon Canal, and although we are legally two parishes, we are seeking ways in which we can do things together, supporting each other across the parish boundaries for the benefit of the whole Benefice as we seek to serve God in this place.

Our villages are a mixture of urban, semi-rural and rural populations lying to the north and east of Trowbridge (the county town of Wiltshire). The overall population of the Benefice is approximately 8,500 (2021 Census preliminary analysis) and growing. The Benefice is situated near to Bath (12 miles) and Chippenham (12 miles).



The parish of Semington is a distinct parish to the east of the Benefice, with a strong village identity, served by the Church of St. George. The congregation work well together and although they may be small in number, they reach out into many aspects of village life including that of the local school. The other three churches to the north of Trowbridge, form the parish of Hilpertion with Staverton following the merging in 2020. St. Michael and All Angels' in Hilpertion is the principal church, while St. Mary Magdalen in Horse Road is a great venue for community outreach, these two churches work closely together and most of the congregation worships in both venues. Although both Staverton and Hilpertion have a village identity, both villages are growing rapidly as the demand for new housing spreads out from Trowbridge. About two miles north of Hilpertion is the small hamlet of Whaddon, served by the Church of St. Mary the Virgin, where attendance at the monthly BCP service is enhanced by some from outside the Benefice.

Safeguarding

'There will be no need of a safeguarding policy in heaven, but here on earth, where sin abounds, it is an important way that we can endeavour to provide a safe space at all times, so that the Holy Spirit is able to work.'

Safeguarding is seen as a priority within our church communities and is a standing agenda item for our PCCs. We are progressing well with our parish safeguarding dashboard and any safeguarding action points are raised at PCC, and we are working hard to address these.

We have adopted and are committed to, the House of Bishops' 'Promoting a Safer Church: Safeguarding Policy Statement'.

[The Canalside Benefice - Safeguarding](#)

Our Vision

Working within the Salisbury Diocesan Vision Statement of **Making Jesus Known**, we have recently adopted three strands to our Benefice vision, although we have been working towards these for some time.

The three strands are:

Sharing God's Love
Serving Our Community
Caring for Creation.

Our Team

Rector: YOU

Associate Priest: Rev. Joy Albone

Benefice Administrator: Michael Gamble (working eight hours per week mainly from home) who amongst his other jobs, produces a weekly newsletter, which since the pandemic has included the minister's reflection on the lectionary readings, for those who are unable to attend our services and without access to the internet.

The ministry team is ably supported by two Lay Worship Leaders and ten Lay Pastoral Assistants working across the Benefice.

In addition, we have a team of committed and hardworking Wardens. They are supported by our two PCC's, Hilperton & Staverton and Semington.

Other volunteers include: numerous dedicated welcomers, readers, intercessors, flower arrangers, refreshment providers, odd job people, cleaners and gardeners, all whom assist in making us and our buildings as welcoming as they can possibly be; organists and a small choir in Hilperston; IT/technical support; and a team of bellringers at St. Michael's.

Rev. Joy Albone

I was ordained in 2019 and joined Canalside Benefice as Curate at that time. On completion of my curacy, following a time of prayer and discernment it felt right to continue in the Benefice as Associate Priest, and thus I was licensed to the Benefice in 2022. I currently offer approximately 20 hours a week to the Benefice, plus three Sundays per month. I have taken the lead in our children and families ministry, including our schools, and I have a heart for pastoral ministry, especially among the older and more frail members of our churches and villages.



Ecumenical and Church Links

The Benefice has links to Christian Action in the Trowbridge Area (CATA)

www.trowbridgechurchestogether.org which has joint services, outreach and schools' work and an interdenominational Ministers' Meeting. We are also developing links with the recently established Cornerstone Christian Fellowship, which worships in Staverton School, with a desire to develop closer ties in the future. One of the leaders of Cornerstone Church has become a Foundation Governor at Staverton School.

*"We greatly value our strong links with Canalside, [who have] ... encouraged and welcomed us ... [as we seek to] reach out to our community with God's love."
David Ross, Cornerstone Church.*

SHARING GOD'S LOVE

Lay Worship Leaders and Lay Pastoral Assistants

We recognise that, not only is our Rector unable to do everything in our Benefice, it's a Biblical principle that the Church is made up of many people, each with something to give (1 Cor 12). Our Lay Worship Leaders work closely with the licensed ministers, assisting in Sunday Worship where appropriate, as well as leading Midweek Worship in Hilperton twice a month, and the occasional Sunday Service of the Word. They also lead Compline during Holy Week.

Our Lay Pastoral Assistants are active in prayer and connecting with the housebound both in person and by telephone. Some also assist with occasional offices, and leading community outreach including Toddlers@TheTin. Their focus is on all people, within the church and beyond.



Tea@theTin

is an informal tea-time service that runs once a month.

This service has a faithful congregation who gather to explore bible stories through drama, craft, games and prayer and of course, our services always include food. Over the last 15 months we have celebrated three

baptisms, all of young people, who still regularly attend, and two of our young people were among those confirmed last December.

Breakfast Church

in Semington is a lay led initiative, reaching out to all ages in the village with a short period of worship and reflection preceded and followed by a shared breakfast.



Home Groups

At present the Benefice has four Home Groups. One of the home groups meets via Zoom. We feel that our Home Groups are an important part of our Christian community, to develop and encourage old and new members to explore and enquire into their Christian journey. Since Covid these groups have had new members and we hope this will continue. We consider these spaces to be “safe” places where anything is discussed and people’s feelings not judged or criticised. We hope that our new Rector will encourage these values and support us in furthering this work.

Prayer Groups

In addition to regular times of Morning Prayer on Zoom, Christians living in Semington from various church traditions meet to pray once a month. A small team also carries out monthly prayer visiting during the summer. A letter from the Church is distributed to homes prior to the visits, and the area visited is then prayed for in Church the following Sunday, including any requests received.



SERVING OUR COMMUNITY

Schools

We have three lovely Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary Schools in the Benefice - Staverton, Hilperton, and St. George's Semington, which is part of the White Horse Foundation. The senior leadership team of all three schools has changed in the last two years and we now have a really good relationship with all the schools and a desire to foster even closer connections. We are privileged to take Collective Worship in each school on a weekly basis, either from a member of clergy, (when we are fully staffed), our brilliant Open the Book team or one of our foundation governors. In this way we take the gospel message to over 500 children every week, plus the staff.



*A quote from a year 5 participant -
"This is my dream come true today.
This is the first time I've helped 'Open the Book'."*



We aim to lead a time of Prayer Spaces with each school, every year and children from our schools also attend services at our Churches to celebrate major festivals and of course when the older pupils move on to their new schools. We also love to welcome children into church on other occasions to explore the building and talk about aspects relevant to their school curriculum. As our new Rector, we would like you to become the Ex-Officio Governor in Staverton School and St. George's School. Rev. Joy is currently the Ex-Officio Governor for Hilperton School.

Ed Powe, Head of Staverton School writes: "Staverton School is incredibly proud of its church school and community status. When I joined as Headteacher in 2021, I was very fortunate to have the support and welcome from Rev John Rees, former Rector of Staverton. I remember what an immense encouragement this was for me, starting at an uncertain time for the school after a period of instability.

"[We] would love ... to have a similar relationship with the new Rector, who sees children and adults flourishing as a main part of their calling and ministry."

James McKenna, Assistant Principal of St. George's School writes:

"The leadership of our new Rector will be crucial in fostering a strong and united Christian ethos that permeates every aspect of life at St George's"

Toddlers@TheTin is a small friendly group led by volunteers, that meets weekly in termtime at the Tin Church. Children are accompanied by a parent or carer to each session. Each week is themed with a bible story and related activities. We would like a rector who would support this group and be happy to visit occasionally.



*One of the mothers recently wrote,
"The atmosphere you create, as well as the lovely, relaxed nature of the volunteers, make the sessions very special - not just for our children but for us Mums too."*

Friendship Group

Friendship Group is an informal, friendly monthly gathering at St Mary Magdalen's where people can have a chat with friends old and new, enjoy a cup of tea or coffee, bring their knitting or crochet, play board games or other activities. About 14-18 people really enjoy coming along and we're always pleased to welcome new members. The donations given for refreshments provide a useful addition to Church Funds.

Community Café

Community Café meets monthly at St Mary Magdalen's, as part of our outreach. It provides a venue for members of the community to come together for tea and a chat and is run by a handful of volunteers. There are usually between 15 and 20 attendees.

Remembrance



We have three War Memorials in the Benefice, situated in Semington Churchyard, Hilperton Village and Staverton School, where services are held annually. The memorial at Staverton School was relocated there when the former village church was closed, and now the whole school gather to commemorate

Remembrance on the Friday closest to Remembrance Sunday.

CARING FOR CREATION



Demonstrating that the Gospel is good news for God's earth, we are working hard to show how we are caring for God's earth in different areas of our life and work.

We are a Fairtrade Benefice and have been awarded the Places of Worship Fairtrade Award, and our dedicated Benefice

"Eco group" are supporting us in



working towards the Eco Church bronze award in Rocha UK's award scheme.

Caring for God's creation, we have dedicated wildlife areas in our churchyards. They have become a haven for wildlife with squirrels using the trees, there is 'evidence' of foxes and rabbits visiting but above all we see lots of birds including robins, tits, swallows, jackdaw and pigeons. In the Spring, areas were cleared and planted with wildflowers; some of which flowered this summer but we should see even more flowering next season.



OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

We pray that, together with our new rector, we will continue to grow in the depth of our spirituality, and in our mission to proclaim the gospel. We are always seeking new ways of sharing God's love. This is a special time of transition for us, presenting an opportunity to embrace innovative practices, to take an objective close look at styles of worship, to enhance spiritual growth for all, and to develop insights into why some attend and stay, others come and go and others show less interest.

Supporting our young people:

- our caring for young people, after baptism, starts with our flourishing Toddlers@TheTin. We seek to grow new leaders to support our present leaders and to enable this group to continue and grow;
- we have a thriving ministry to our three primary schools (see above), however, our work with the majority of the children ends when they move onto secondary education (there is currently no secondary school in the Benefice), although a few do still attend our services, especially Tea@TheTin. We are seeking ways in which we can work closer across the Deanery, and with Wiltshire Youth for Christ, to provide appropriate support and outreach to our young people and continue to share the good news of the gospel with them.

Ageing population within the Church family:

- a significant proportion of the population of our villages, and consequently of our church membership, are growing older and frailer. We are blessed with the wisdom of many in their eighties and nineties, and have a significant ministry amongst the elderly. We are able to draw many in through social gatherings. We also seek to care for those who are housebound and unable to attend regular worship in our buildings (which includes many formerly active members). They are regularly visited, and communion is taken to some of them.

Finances:

- payment of parish share has always been a priority across the Benefice. Semington PCC are fortunate to be in a position to pay in full at the beginning of each calendar year. In Hilperton and Staverton we have always paid our full share, but are seeking creative ways to encourage increased giving and find new sources of finance;
- for more information on our finances, visit <https://canalsidebenefice.org.uk/about-us/info/>

Church Buildings:

- our church buildings are mostly in good condition. However, there is a need to bring some of them up to modern standards. The church at St Mary Magdalen is ideally placed to serve as a community centre and has recently been refurbished with a new kitchen; there are real opportunities here to develop this further as a focal point for the whole community.

New housing:

- several new housing estates in the Benefice are currently either being built, or seeking planning approval. They will become an important mission field in the next few years.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

The Role

We are seeking to appoint an enthusiastic Priest who will share our vision in a way that is effective in living out the Mission of Jesus. We are looking for a Rector who has some or all of the characteristics which follow. We recognise that no one person will meet every qualification! But above all we are seeking the person God wants to be here.

Faith

We seek a Rector:

- whose personal faith is rooted in prayer and Bible study, who seeks to deepen their own spiritual life, and who will actively seek to discern the will of God for the Benefice;
- who will be our spiritual guide, who will point the Church community to Christ, and who will encourage us to grow spiritually, numerically and financially (in that order);
- who is willing and able to grasp the vision for the Benefice, to make it their own and then to communicate and develop it within our various congregations;
- who is an effective, practical and articulate preacher, who bases their message on the Bible, who is led by the Spirit, and who is able to communicate the Gospel to all;
- who will lead, motivate and encourage the ministry team working throughout the Benefice;
- who will delight in the wide variety of worship styles practised in the benefice, both liturgical and non-liturgical, and who will be happy to be innovative in worship.

Community

Our new Rector:

- will have strong pastoral skills, a heart for people, be a caring and approachable minister for all who live in the Benefice;
- will have a rapport with children, and be able to lead and develop our work in schools and with young people;
- will be a good listener, open to new ideas, and willing to take risks in initiating and encouraging change;
- will be actively involved in the local community outside of the immediate church family, and also in ecumenical relationships (especially with the two independent churches now operating within the benefice).

Working Together

Our churches already work closely together. Our new Rector:

- will be a collaborative leader, keen to work closely in collaboration with our associate priest, our benefice administrator, our PCCs, our LPAs, our LWLs, and our many other gifted lay people across the benefice;
- will have administrative, organisational and leadership skills, and be able to manage time effectively;
- will be able to delegate effectively, to support and encourage the many lay people who currently contribute to services, and to actively motivate others to find their own ministries;
- will be sensitive to the needs of each congregation, but will encourage collaboration between them;
- will, preferably, be comfortable with digital media, and have good IT skills;
- will be sensitive to the fact that there is a diversity of strong views within the benefice in respect of Living in Love and Faith and the question of blessing same-sex marriages, and will (whatever their personal opinions) seek to defuse any tensions on this question which may arise.

Wiltshire Air Ambulance

Our previous incumbent has been chaplain to the Wiltshire Air Ambulance (which is based in the benefice) for a number of years, and still holds that position. However, as he expects to retire from that role within the next year or two there may be an opportunity for our new Rector to be involved.

Conclusion

Given all these demands, our new Rector will need to be able to recognise their own need for rest and recreation, to maintain an appropriate work/life balance and have a sense of humour!

What We Offer

This position offers the opportunity to lead a thriving Christian community, and to promote the gospel in a variety of different settings – in our three schools, in new housing developments, in both rural and semi-urban settings, as well as in our four churches.

We will be committed to working with our new Rector. We are very conscious of the demands which the incumbent will face, and will be committed to working with them to mitigate those demands. We will all be committed to praying for and supporting the new Rector and family. We expect, indeed, insist that our Rector takes regular days off, plus holiday and retreat times. The Rector is part of our team, part of our church family, and must not be afraid of asking for help.

THE CHILDREN'S PROFILE

Children's and young people's thoughts on our new Rector

Our new rector should know ...

About God and Jesus.

Lots of prayers and Bible Stories.
How to pronounce difficult words from the Bible.
How to lead worship.
How to get the children involved.
How to engage with young people.
How to comfort and respect others.
How to arrive on time.



Our new rector should be ...

A Christian
Passionate about God.
Dedicated to God.

Kind, selfless and caring.
Trustworthy and honest.
Insightful and knowledgeable.
Joyful.
Funny and have a good sense of humour.
Friendly.
Welcoming.
Respectful, responsible and reasonable.
A good communicator.
Confident to speak in front of people.
Encouraging.
Quiet and subtly persuasive.

Our new rector should ...

Encourage others to take part in worship, especially the children.
Be able to make worship fun.
Be a good storyteller.
Be willing to invite everyone into church.
Be able to sing and/or play an instrument.
Be present.

Be OK with making mistakes but able to learn from them.
Want to come into our schools and get involved.
Live out our school values.

THE RECTORY



The Rectory was purchased in October 2007. It is a two storey detached house, in very good condition, built in 2004 and situated on the Staverton Marina housing complex, just a two-minute walk from the Kennet and Avon Canal. On the ground floor there is an entrance hallway, cloakroom, living room with access to the garden, dining room, a small study, breakfast room/kitchen with access to the garden and a utility room with side access. On the first floor there are 4 bedrooms (one en-suite) and a bathroom. The separate double garage has been converted into the Benefice office, as the study is undersized. There is parking for six vehicles on site. The front garden is open plan and surfaced in shingle with small areas of shrubbery. The rear garden has a small lawn and seating area. The house is 146 m2.



Some photos of the Rectory



TWO PARISHES ~ FOUR CHURCHES

THE PARISH OF HILPERTON AND STAVERTON

The Parish forms the western part of the Benefice approximately one mile from Trowbridge.

Hilpertton has developed from a linear village and is now more suburban than rural. It is a village with many hidden gems and a strong community spirit. The nature of housing stock reflects a broad span, ranging from ex-council properties and cottages to Georgian mansions and new build properties with a broad socio-economic mix. There are two large housing estates, (Paxcroft Mead and Castle Mead) on the edge of the village with further expansion planned on various sites. Pastoral responsibility is shared by Hilpertton and Staverton, Trowbridge St Thomas' and St Mary's at Steeple Ashton. The three church parish boundaries run through the estates. In the main village there is a Church primary school, a pre-school, a public house, and a village hall and recreation ground. The village of Staverton lies to the north of the Kennet and Avon and has both the railway and River Avon running through it. The Nestle Factory used to dominate life in the village and local employment. Although the company still has a presence in the factory it is now a far smaller concern. The village population used to be one of the smallest in Wiltshire but that all changed in the 2000s with the development of the Marina residential area where the Rectory is located. There is a large Primary School in the village and alongside it stands the former school buildings now occupied by Emmaus School, a private school with a Christian foundation for children aged 5-16 years.

Full details of the history of each of our churches can be found at <https://canalsidebenefice.org.uk/our-churches/>

The Church of St Michael and All Angels HILPERTON



This Grade II listed building and its now closed churchyard are places of beauty. There has been a church on this site at least from the time of the first recorded Rector in 1299 and possibly since Norman times. The church was substantially rebuilt in 1852.

There are six bells in the Tower rung by a dedicated band of ringers. A new roof was fitted in 1996 and the church was redecorated in 2021.

Adjoining the church is a small meeting room (St. Michael's Room) used for Benefice and community activities, including a gardening club and Scout Group meetings. It is well equipped with a fridge, microwave and has accessible toilet and baby changing facilities.

The recent Quinquennial Report showed no major problems with the fabric and furnishings of the church. A new gas boiler was fitted in the last five years and the church has recently been re-carpeted.

Music/Choir/Recording of services: We have a Choir Master who is also our lead Technician and organises the music and projects words on-screen at most services. There is an organist and a small choir who provide music once a month and/or for festivals and carol services and some weddings. Otherwise we use recorded music, downloaded or bought from source that allow the use in services and, where needed, on-line. Since Covid we have been recording most services and uploading them to YouTube after the service; the need for this is under review and hard to quantify, but we do seem to have ten to twenty regular viewers of it.

Each Wednesday a Service is held at 10am followed by coffee and fellowship. The services are a mix of Holy Communion and Morning Worship.

The finances for St Michael's Church (now combined with St Mary Magdalen's) are generally sound with income drawn from a firm base of planned giving mostly by Standing Order the collection plate and supported by Gift Aid. The Parish has always managed to meet its full financial commitments by the end of each financial year. The income is supplemented by receipts for Weddings and Funerals. The PCC also has a deposit fund containing a number of restricted-use and designated-use funds.

Charitable Giving: through the year the Parish supports a number of charities including Storehouse Foodbank. We have collection points in our church porches, Children's Society Boxes, Link to Hope - Benefice annual shoe box appeal, Water Aid and emergency appeals.



The Church of St Mary Magdalen HILPERTON

Following the closure of St Paul's Church at Staverton in 2011, St Mary Magdalen's became the main centre of worship in the north of the Parish.

It mainly serves the area stretching from Horse Road to the River Avon.

St Mary's is a church dating from 1889.

The sanctuary is constructed in flint stone, but the hall portion is corrugated iron, built

from a Harrods' "flat-pack". The original intention was to re-build it in stone, but it never happened due to insufficient funds. For its age and construction the church is in a reasonable state of repair with a programme of repairs ongoing each year as and when funds are available.

St Mary's congregation is mostly elderly, reflecting to an extent local demography, although the monthly Tea @ the Tin informal service regularly attracts a respectable number of children. Since the merger of the two parishes, joint services with St Michaels have been regularly held.

The building is ideally placed to serve as a community centre, and the hall is used for various regular and one off bookings: two morning Art groups, Rainbow Guides, Slimming World, Scouts, local and national Elections and occasional Children's Parties. A variety of church fund raising and social events, including Church and Charity Coffee Mornings, Film Show Afternoons, Quiz Nights etc., are also held.

The hall is also used as a venue for outreach with a monthly Friendship Group and Community Café.

St Mary's also hosts Toddlers@theTin as mentioned elsewhere in the profile.



Staverton Churchyard

The Parish Church of St Paul at Staverton is now closed and has been adapted into a dwelling.

The Churchyard around the building is open and the PCC remains responsible for the maintenance of this area. It is a beautiful location with wonderful views of the meadows and the River Avon. A number of years ago a Friends of St Paul's Churchyard Scheme was established to help with the cost of maintaining the grounds to a satisfactory standard.

The Church of St Mary the Virgin WHADDON

Whaddon – the 'Wood on the Hill' - is a tiny hamlet two miles north east of Hilperton. It stands at the end of a winding lane which goes no further. It is still a farming community. St Mary's was originally built in the Norman period, but restored in the 19th century. It has associations with Jane Austen.



The local congregation is tiny; however, St Mary's monthly BCP communion services attract several people who live at a distance. Services at festival times such as Easter, harvest, and Christmas, usually fill the church. Very occasionally weddings, baptisms and funerals are held at St Mary's. We are in the process of incorporating the finances of St Mary's into the Parish accounts of Hilperton and Staverton.



THE PARISH OF SEMINGTON

Semington is a small village with distinct boundaries. It has experienced some limited new housing growth in recent years and currently has a population of around 1,000. The village has a Church of England Primary School and a village hall. Until early 2023 it had a pub – the Somerset Arms – but this is currently closed and its future is uncertain. An Independent Living Centre in the village provides resources for the disabled and disability groups within Wiltshire and the South-West. Small industrial units provide some employment and services, as do other small enterprises.

The Church of St George SEMINGTON

St. George's is a Grade II listed, 15th century church, with seating for 80+. It is situated centrally in the village surrounded by a well-kept open graveyard. The building is well-loved and kept clean and in good order. There is a public address and loop system. No major problems were identified in the 2021 Quinquennial Inspection.

Currently, St George's holds 2 services a month –

- Breakfast Church – a lay-led informal worship time suitable for all ages, attracting 20-30 people
- Holy Communion – with a small, regular congregation of 10-15 people

The regular attendees at church services, although small in number, are generous givers, both financially and in the time and expertise given. The Share is always paid in full at the beginning of the year. We commit 10% of our income to support Christian mission and charities at home and abroad.



*Our prayer is that God will open
our eyes to see where he is
already working in our village,
so that we can join him there.*

SOME FACTS AND FIGURES ABOUT OUR CHURCHES

	St Michael's Hilperton	St Mary Magdalen's	St Mary the Virgin Whaddon	St George's Semington
Electoral Roll Total 2023	88			21
Average attendance at Sunday Services in 2022/23	41	27	13	12
Baptisms in 2022/23	7	2	0	2
Weddings in 2022/23	3	0	0	1
Funerals in 2022/23	12	0	1	6

PATTERN OF WORSHIP USED IN THE BENEFICE PRIOR TO THE VACANCY

	1 st Sunday	2 nd Sunday	3 rd Sunday	4 th Sunday	5 th Sunday
St Michael's	10:30 HOLY COMMUNION (CW) (alternating sometimes with St Mary Magdalen's)	10:30 HOLY COMMUNION (CW) with Choir and Organ	10:30 TOGETHER in WORSHIP or ALL AGE COMMUNION (alternating some- times with St Mary Magdalen's)	10:30 HOLY COMMUNION (CW)	BENEFICE HOLY COMMUNION (CW) rotates around the four churches (times vary)
St Mary Magdalen's	10:30 HOLY COMMUNION (CW) (alternating sometimes with St Michael's)		10:30 TOGETHER in WORSHIP or ALL AGE COMMUNION (alternating some- times with St Michael's)	16:00 TEA@theTIN	
St George's		09:15 BREAKFAST CHURCH	09:15 HOLY COMMUNION (CW)		
St Mary the Virgin	15:00 HOLY COMMUNION (BCP)				

LIFE IN OUR VILLAGES

There are many clubs and organisations across our communities including Football, Cricket and Running clubs and Trowbridge Rugby Club is based in the Benefice just outside Hilperton. There is a Village Hall in each of the main villages together with a social club and public house in Staverton and two in Hilperton. The halls host a variety of activities including two Art Groups, three Womens Institutes, exercise classes, Rainbows, Brownies, Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Explorers, bingo, quizzes, skittles, a gardening club, a flying club, choirs, a book club and a crib club. Each of the Villages also hold Annual Fetes.

Semington:

Semington Coffee morning is held weekly in the Village Hall and it celebrated its 19th birthday last year. It is well attended, with 20 – 30 people each week, and has a host of volunteers who man it on a rota basis. It provides an opportunity for villagers to share concerns of anyone needing help – e.g. lifts to appointments, illness, a visit or prayer requests, as well as catch up with and discuss all the latest local, national and international news! Semington is a very caring village and became more so during lock-down when a ‘warden’ was appointed for every road and street. That level of help and concern has happily continued and there is almost always someone who can help out.

Other activities in Semington include:

A Duck Race on the Brook, Fun Run, Dog Show, Cream teas, Go Kart Races, turning on of the Christmas tree lights, and an annual bonfire night celebration has just been reintroduced. Many events include live music. We have lots going on in the village! More details can be found on the website hosted by the Parish Council - www.semington.org.uk - including on its Parish Magazine page - www.semington.org.uk/news/parish-magazine/ The magazine is delivered free of charge by volunteers to every home in the village each month.

1st Hilperton Scout Group:

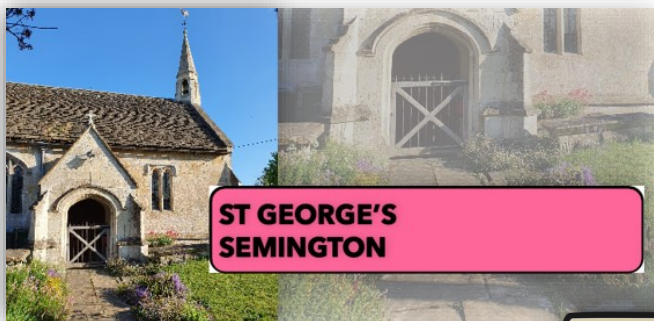
The Scout Group is long established in the Benefice and one of the largest in the District with over 120 members aged 4 to 18. They are mainly based at Hilperton Village Hall but also hold regular meetings at St Mary Magdalen's and in St Michael's Room. The Group supports events and activities throughout the Benefice. Over the last few summers the Cub Pack members have maintained flowers troughs and the garden at St Mary's. The previous Rector was Group Chaplain and regularly attended unit meetings and it is hoped that this relationship will continue in the future. The Group plays a very significant role in Hilperton's annual Remembrance Commemoration.

BRADFORD DEANERY

Bradford Deanery is a wonderful place to live and minister, our Chapter is supportive and we are all united in our desire to Make Jesus Known across our various traditions and contexts. We are in a time of great change in the Deanery with several vacancies happening over the next couple of years, and we are looking for people who want to be part of a Deanery that is actively seeking to work together collaboratively; to pray for each other, to offer support to colleagues, to contribute to the vision of Making Jesus Known, to have fun together and to build God's Kingdom here in west Wiltshire. Our Deanery covers three major market towns: Trowbridge, Melksham and Bradford on Avon and their surrounding Villages. It is the largest Deanery in the Wilts Archdeaconry with an energised Deanery Synod with a vision for serving our Parishes and supporting the wider ministry of our Churches. We hope you will be excited about opportunities there are here.

Rev. Jane Palmer — Rural Dean





**ST GEORGE'S
SEMINGTON**



**ST MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS
HILPERTON**



**ST MARY THE VIRGIN
WHADDON**



**ST MARY MAGDALEN'S
HILPERTON**

Sharing God's Love;
Serving our Community;
Caring for Creation.

