

An aerial photograph of a coastal cliffside. The cliff face is a mix of brown and tan earth and rock, with some green vegetation. A narrow path winds along the top of the cliff. To the left of the cliff, there are several large, rectangular fields, some of which appear to be plowed or recently harvested. The ocean is visible to the right, with waves crashing against the base of the cliff. The sky is a clear, pale blue.

**The Golden Cap Team  
Benefice Profile  
Team Rector**

*The churches of Bettiscombe, Catherston Leweston, Charmouth, Chideock, Fishpond, Hawkchurch, Lyme Regis, Marshwood, Monkton Wyld, Morcombelake, Whitchurch Canonicorum, and Wootton Fitzpaine*

## Introduction from the Bishop of Sherborne



In the last year the Golden Cap Team has developed new energy and vision for the next stage of its mission and ministry and now seek a Rector to take them forward. The Team made up of two part-time team vicars, a training curate, retired clergy and a significant number of lay leaders (Licensed Lay Ministers, Lay Pastoral Assistants, Lay Worship leaders, an administrator and churchwardens), are looking for a colleague who can lead them to develop fresh ways of making Jesus known in these rural parishes, as well as developing discipleship and growing the Lay Leadership Team.

There are significant challenges and opportunities within the benefice, encouraging creativity and diversity around the different churches, but also working with the traditional and routine where it works best.

The parishes describe themselves well. Anyone coming here would have to enjoy rural and coastal life, there is a great deal of travel to be undertaken between churches and some of the lanes are very narrow. There are a significant number of scattered farms and hamlets in between the villages, however there is much within each of the towns and villages and plenty to join in with.

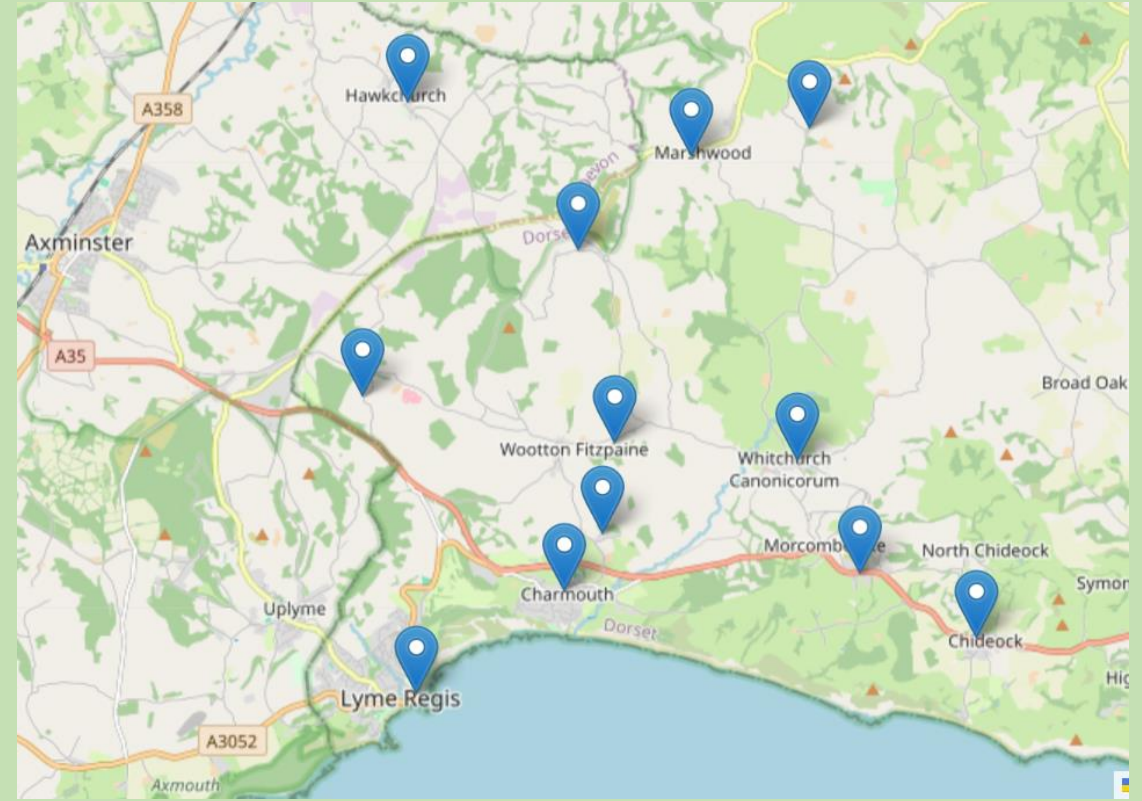
Each community and each church is distinctive, however with such a large benefice we are primarily looking for a visionary leader and enabler of leaders, someone with a light touch and a pastoral heart. Reflecting the care of Christ, but also acknowledging that focal ministry of every Christian in every place needs to thrive if each church is to continue to flourish in the Marshwood Vale and the coastal areas. There are many opportunities here also to look outwards, and to join in with all that is going on. A good work/life balance is essential.

The Lyme Bay deanery, in which the Golden Cap Benefice is situated, seeks to be a supportive place bringing together the rural clergy with those in the seaside towns. There will be a warm welcome amongst this clergy grouping for whoever comes to this benefice. More recently the deanery has welcomed a pioneer priest into the Bridport team with a remit for chaplaincy to the arts, to work with others in the deanery, and that, together with a diocesan commitment to supporting both rural and coastal ministry in the years ahead, will ensure future resources will be deployed favourably.

Should you wish to know more about this vacancy after you have read this profile please do not hesitate to contact one of the Team Vicars or the Archdeacon of Sherborne (The Ven Penny Sayer 01305 269074). We offer in this part of Dorset great opportunities for mission, wonderful countryside, supportive colleagues and some deeply spiritual places of worship, pilgrimage and retreat.

**Bishop Karen**

## The Golden Cap Benefice- Coast and countryside



Our stunning coastline stretches from Lyme Regis to Seatown (Chideock) and is part of the World Heritage Site called the Jurassic coast. Golden Cap is a famous landmark on the coast managed by the National Trust. The whole area is a holiday destination all year round and in the summer the population can rise to over 20,000 with many caravan sites in our coastal communities. People come to enjoy the scenery, our beaches, the sea, walking and fossil hunting.

The landscape of the Marshwood Vale is agricultural and consists of narrow winding lanes between farms and small communities. The vale is surrounded by hills, to the north including the hillforts of Lambert's Castle, Coney's Castle and Pilsdon Pen. The vale, designated an area of natural beauty has a sacred quality so it is no wonder visitors come to have their souls restored!

## The Golden Cap Benefice is an extraordinary place:

### As a benefice we are excited about:

- Our vision and plans for our church buildings to be sacred spaces at the heart of our communities being used every day by our church, community, [pilgrims](#) and visitors.
- The connection people experience with our creator God in our beautiful countryside and coast as they visit our area.
- The arts and the artists and musicians that spark creativity and enrich our church life.
- Our recent and current building projects that will enable more accessible church and community use.
- Our close contact with our local schools with a good working relationship and growing ministry.
- Our great teams working together to make Jesus known in our communities.
- Our openness to changing things to see more people come to know Jesus for themselves.

### Our challenges:

- It's a big benefice and you'll learn how to reverse at reasonable speed in narrow country lanes.
- The coast and countryside will take your breath away and lift your spirits but our people are hard to reach as there are 7,000 residents scattered across 60 square miles.
- National Statistics tell us we have more people living in our benefice aged between 30 - 65 yrs than those who are retired but we hardly ever see them at church. We are working on new ways to engage this group and our local families beyond our schools.
- Our buildings are glorious, iconic, remarkable sacred spaces and we are blessed to have them but they costly to run and maintain.
- Many people move into our benefice from big cities, especially London, bringing amazing life experience, talent and wealth but this hides the deprivation caused by loneliness, isolation, and lack of work that is an under current in our communities

## The Golden Cap Team...Our invitation to you

### As our Rector, we would like help with:

**Making us visible** by taking part and becoming known through community events and online through social media. We know the first steps to mission are prayer and building relationships outside our church circles. Help us be better known, so that more people can come to know Jesus.

**Developing fresh ways** to make Jesus known creatively, through our music and worship life and our discipleship and community programmes to reach the silent majority of our 7,000 resident population, who we almost never encounter - the 30 - 65 years old and families beyond schools. We've got ideas and we hope you have too!

**Growing, training and caring for a new pastoral team.** With 12 churches in 60 sq miles, local pastoral care often suffers. We need help with growing a lay led team to break the myth that you've only been visited 'by the church' if the vicar drops by.

**Growing our lay leadership teams** in our churches and developing our Service Leaders team.

**Bring your gifts and the things that make you flourish!**

## You are joining a team...

With twelve church buildings, 10 parishes, many worshipping communities, active work in our local schools and wider community partnerships and programmes, teamwork is essential and part of the joy of joining a large benefice.

Golden Cap is blessed to have a large team of lay leaders as well as retired clergy, with two Readers, [James Ashdown](#) and Jim Pettifer, an Associate Priest [Lucyann Ashdown](#), a curate [Sarah Keen](#), and two part time Team Vicars, [Virginia Lockett](#) and [Sarah Godfrey](#). Please see our [who's who](#) for more names and faces.

### Administration

Margaret is our part time Administrator who plays an important role in the co-ordination of our benefice. We have a team office and photocopier in Lyme Regis.

### Joint Team Council

Each Parish has 2 representatives that sit on the Benefice Team Council which meets every other month. There is a team treasurer that looks after the team expenses. We are trying to find ways of centralising much of the administrative burden that falls on our small parishes.



# Growing community



Flower festivals



Weddings



Fetes and fun days



Open Tuesdays



Free Xchange cafes

We would love you to hear about each church. We have a lot to say!  
There's more [here](#). (Click on the church photo for more info)



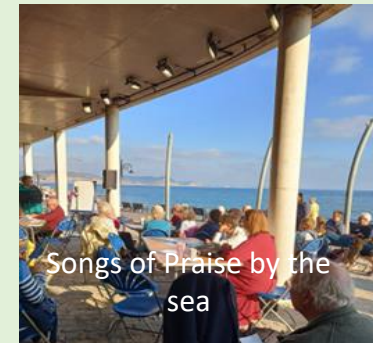
Pilgrimage



Whitchurch CommuniTea



Blessing of the boats



Songs of Praise by the sea



Remembrance

# Growing Younger

## Our schools....an exciting local partnership

With three C of E Primary schools, (Hawkchurch, Marshwood and Lyme Regis), a community primary school (Charmouth) and Woodroffe, the secondary school in Lyme Regis, we are kept busy and have a great team of volunteers and governors.

We love being creative:

Hawkchurch school wrote the liturgy for our Ash Wednesday service and delivered the service for the Team. They've recorded a message for you [here](#).

The children at Marshwood stole the show when we led [the C of E national on-line service](#) last summer

Year 6 transition pilgrimage days are run at St Wite's and the music department at Woodroffe School use St Michael's as a venue for concerts.



Hawkchurch

## Short and sweet.... 30 minute services for families

Help us do more!



Marshwood



Lyme Regis



## Growing deeper.... Spirituality and pilgrimage

### The Vale is an extraordinary sacred space

The church of St Candida and the Holy Cross in Whitchurch Canonorum is called the Cathedral of the Vale. It is one of the rarest of holy places in England and has been a site of pilgrimage for over 1000 years. The medieval shrine contains the body of St Wite (Dorset's patron saint) . It has three holes in it's base where sick medieval pilgrims would place body parts praying for miraculous healing.

Today visitors come and place prayers for healing in the 'limb holes'. Each month we gather up all the prayers and hold them before God.



### St Wite's Way.....come and find rest for your soul

We are excited by our new pilgrimage project led by Rev Virginia Lockett  
A transformative pilgrimage experience for those who are seeking rest, restoration and renewal.

Launched by our bishop in 2023 [St Wite's Way](#) is a pilgrimage experience and guided walks in the heart of West Dorset. Come and find rest for your soul walking in the footsteps of Dorset's patron saint.

## Developing music and worship



In 2009 a new Skrabl organ was built and installed in St Michael's Lyme Regis. Organists come from far away to play it and the South West Organ School uses it to teach and encourage the next generation of church musicians. St Michael's partners with the Lyme Bay Chorale to stage concerts through the year.

### Help us develop music in worship

We have two excellent organists and musical directors and have recently formed the St Michaels' Festival Chorus to sing at special services. Pictured are the chorus and friends from Salisbury Cathedral rehearsing for a concert to raise money for our RNLI.



### Lay worship leaders

We have a team of 8 lay people that lead worship across the team. We want to train more! Our service booklets are giving us a team identity but leave room for creativity.



'Soul soak' is our monthly service of an hour of curated contemporary worship music and prayer. We would love to form a band in the future and are hopeful that this is becoming a fresh expression

### Bell ringing

There are 4 towers with bands of ringers in Lyme Regis, Hawchurch, Chideock and Whitchurch with regular practise nights and Sunday ringing. With it's 10 bells, Lyme Regis has a reputation for advanced ringing and attracts people from a wide area to ring complicated methods.

## Courageous Christian Leadership

### **The Pilsdon Community-sharing a common life of prayer hospitality and work**

The Pilsdon community is a well-established Christian Community located in the benefice. Its Chapel is a lovely old church consecrated for Anglican worship, but the community operates independently from the benefice. Nonetheless there are significant links between us, for instance our associate priest Lucyann regularly takes the 6:30pm Sunday Eucharist

Since 1958, the Pilsdon Community has been offering a refuge to people in crisis, welcoming those from all backgrounds and from many different walks of life – whether young or old, rich or poor.

It is a great blessing to have the community located amongst us; relationships are warm and supportive and it adds a really interesting and positive dimension to ministry in the benefice: it challenges, resources and inspires us.

Please see [the Pilsdon community website](#) for more information



## Where will you live?

The Vicarage is in a quiet close in [Charmouth](#), with plenty of parking. It is a five minute walk to the sea so you can swim before breakfast!

Purpose built as a vicarage, there are 4 bedrooms, 2 reception rooms, a large kitchen and utility room. In addition there is a large study that can be accessed from the front porch so work can be kept separate from the home. The house is heated by gas. There is a double garage and the garden is a manageable size.

You can see a [floor plan here](#) Contact us for a link to a video walk-thru



## Benefice statistics

Not all our churches have services every week and we have a complex rota for managing who does, what, where and when.

Our morning services are at 9.30am and 11am to allow for travel time between. We group our churches geographically to enable the leader to stay and chat for as long as possible after the 9.30am.

We have one festival church St Andrew's Monkton Wyld, which has services 4 times year when the whole village turns up  
Regular attendance in Marshwood 7, Bettiscombe 12, Charmouth 25, Lyme 35, Catherston 6, Morcombelake 4, Chideock 25, Fishpond 6, Hawkchurch 20, Wootton 8, Whitchurch 10. We have an online service with a following of around 35 people a week.

## Service rota

2024	First Sunday	Second Sunday	Third Sunday	Fourth Sunday
Bettiscombe			11am Celtic worship	
Catherston Leweston		9.30am BCP communion		9.30am Morning worship
Charmouth	9.30am Holy communion	9.30am Morning worship	9.30am Holy communion	9.30am Celtic worship 5pm Soul soak
Chideock	11am village worship	11am Holy communion	11am Chideock Praise	11am Holy communion
Fishpond	9.30am Holy communion		9.30am Celtic worship	
Hawkchurch	11am Holy communion	11am Morning worship	11am Holy communion	11am Holy communion
Lyme Regis	8am BCP communion 11am Morning worship	11am Holy communion	11am Holy communion	11am Holy communion
Marshwood		9.30am Holy communion		
Monkton Wyld				
Morecombelake		9.30am BCP communion		9.30am Morning worship
Whitchurch Canonicorum		11am Holy communion	11am Celtic worship	11am Healing communion
Wootton Fitzpaine	11am Morning worship		11am Holy Communion	
Pilsdon community	6.30am Communion	6.30am Communion	6.30am Communion	6.30am Communion

**Life events in 2023   Baptisms 9, Weddings 9, Funerals and burial of ashes 42**

Golden Cap Team.....  
This is your invitation

Come and *'be'* with us.

Bring everything you are under God  
because...

Golden Cap can offer you space;  
to breathe, to work hard, to try new things,  
to swim in the sea and the Holy Spirit.

This is not a place to retire quietly but a  
place to put down roots and flourish in  
your ministry with us, led by God.

For an informal chat contact either  
Team Vicar  
[sarah@goldencapchurches.org](mailto:sarah@goldencapchurches.org) or  
[virginia@goldencapchurches.org](mailto:virginia@goldencapchurches.org)

Watch our welcome video [here](#)

Fishpond church