

# THE CLEY HILL VILLAGES

## BENEFICE PROFILE



*Cley Hill, Wiltshire*

## THE HEYTESBURY DEANERY

## DIOCESE OF SALISBURY



*Salisbury Cathedral*

## **INTRODUCTION FROM THE BISHOP OF RAMSBURY**

Welcome!

Thank you for your interest in the post of parish priest in the beautiful Cley Hill Villages: part of the See of Ramsbury in the Diocese of Salisbury. For the first time, we are including in this post the wider role of 'Village Church Missioner' so that this benefice may be a pilot for co-operative rural ministry within the emerging West Wilts Missional Area. This designation means that time and resource can be invested in looking with neighbours at the particular gift of village churches, their people and their buildings - and how they relate to nearby market towns.

For a priest who is passionate about the future of the rural church, then, this is a super opportunity for creative ministry in churches blessed with wonderful buildings and willing teams, within one of the most beguiling landscapes in Wiltshire.

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. 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.

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 collaborative 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,*

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Andrew Ramsbury". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the text "Sincerely in Christ,".

## **CLEY HILL VILLAGES BENEFICE**

The Benefice lies between Bath and Salisbury and covers approximately 25 square miles of countryside comprising downland, woodland and farmland within the Cranborne Chase area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It is made up of largely rural communities with mixed arable and stock farming. Local inhabitants also commute or work from home and there is a historic military connection. The river Deverill rises above Kingston Deverill and flows through the Deverill Valley, which is mostly rolling chalk downland with wooded coombes around Crockerton, into the River Wylde. The villages of Corsley, Chapmanslade and Horningsham lie in valleys surrounded by the Longleat Estate. Driving around the area is relatively easy, with no journey taking more than thirty minutes from one end of the Benefice to the other, unless a herd of cows needs to cross one's route!

The towns of Warminster, Frome and Mere provide excellent local amenities—shops, doctors, dentists, vets. The area is well served by the A36 and A350, with good access to the arterial A303. There are good main line local train stations and a daily coach service to London from Frome and Warminster.

## **SALISBURY DIOCESE**

The Diocese of Salisbury covers most of Wiltshire and Dorset under Bishop Stephen Lake with two suffragan Bishops.



*Bishop Stephen*

The Cley Hill Benefice is in the See of Ramsbury ministered by Bishop Andrew Rumsey.



*Bishop Andrew Rumsey*

## **HEYTESBURY DEANERY**

The Deanery consists of 20 parishes in 7 benefices, with 32 churches.

The Rural Dean is the Rev. Clifford Stride.

# **THE CLEY HILL VILLAGES BENEFICE**

## **OUR VISION**

Bishop Andrew's introduction indicates the direction we are embarking on, embracing the Diocesan objective of Making Jesus Known, across our diverse villages. We are seeking someone who can energise and inspire us with their ministry and leadership ability. You will find in our parishes very self reliant teams who have risen amazingly well to the challenges of the period of vacancy and are open to fresh ideas. Whilst the churches in our Benefice are at different stages of progress, all accept that embracing change is necessary for us to continue developing our mission to all in our communities.

Our parishes have always operated in a collaborative environment and we see our new incumbent being our guide and catalyst, with the ability to delegate and draw in new talent to enhance our efforts both in our Benefice as well as the wider Deanery.

We hope you will seriously consider this post, and if you are the person whom God has chosen to come here, we look forward to sharing ministry with you. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch; [deverillsllm@btinternet.com](mailto:deverillsllm@btinternet.com)

## **We are looking for a priest to lead us in developing and growing our Benefice.**

Who will:

- Be a team leader, encouraging and developing lay ministries.
- Work across the deanery to encourage smaller churches and the missional role of their historic buildings
- Be a kind and loving pastor.
- Develop new forms of worship
- Engage with families, young people and our three Primary Schools.
- Embrace and enjoy being part of the wider social life of our villages, to be a visible presence and sign of God's love.

## **MISSION IN OUR BENEFICE AND THE WIDER DEANERY**

We are excited to be at the forefront of Mission efforts and be part of the Diocesan pilot scheme, to trial the post of a Village Churches Missioner in the Heytesbury Deanery. Whilst we have made small steps in this direction in our Benefice, we are seeking a new incumbent to provide us and the wider Deanery with inspiration and leadership towards renewal and engagement with generations lost to us over time.

We are looking for an incumbent who will undertake this role and also lead and inspire us and the wider Deanery. Guiding us towards renewal, outreach and engagement with our villages and schools.

This is linked to the churches national Buildings for Mission project, which is jointly led by Bishop Andrew, our Bishop of Ramsbury. The project offers support for churches in reviewing and planning community engagement around the church building. In the Cley Hill Benefice, we have been seeking ways that our churches can better serve our worshipping community and encourage the village communities to flourish.

The first Church in our Benefice working towards this is St Philip and St James in Chapmanslade, with plans to install facilities at this church to develop the potential of the building as a community resource. The Diocesan 'community engagement enabler', who is working in both Bristol and Salisbury diocese, is already providing assistance and guidance. This development is part of the church mission and plan for growth as it connects the worshipping community and wider community, looking at the role and future of Churches in this Benefice as well as across the Deanery.

St Philip and St James, has been on this pathway for some time. A small church with limited space, that has been reordering the nave to form a meeting area. The addition of a temporary external toilet and drinks making facilities have followed and there are plans to provide a permanent toilet, a mix of chairs and pews and the provision of a small kitchen facility primarily for drinks. This will provide mission and outreach facilities.

This is already endorsed by the Parish Council with support from the village community, including all the voluntary organisations in the village. The Parish Council awarded a grant for £15,000 towards this initiative. We are keen to develop these plans, together with our new incumbent, to interact with local communities and then consider how the other churches in our benefice, as well as other rural parishes in the Deanery, can develop similar initiatives.

There are other outreach activities in our Benefice; ranging from a Messy Tent providing children's activities at local functions, church led community coffee mornings, a community lunch club in Horningsham to active participation in our 2 CofE VA schools.

## **NEXT STEPS**

Social engagement through village activities with Parish Councils and Village Hall Committees across the Benefice.

Utilise our church buildings to provide amenities for local villagers, with churches being opened up for wider community use and expanded Church activities. Encourage non Church goers to become more comfortable being in our building and allowing us to reach younger generations and build on the relationships with our church schools.

We would like to explore how we optimise these initiatives across our Benefice and Deanery. Greater community use of the Church for other activities has already proved fruitful and we hope that further development of fresh forms of worship inspired by our new incumbent, will provide opportunities for including those not involved in the life of our parish family.



# CLEY HILL VILLAGES BENEFICE - CHURCHES, SCHOOLS AND THE RECTORY



Chapmanslade School



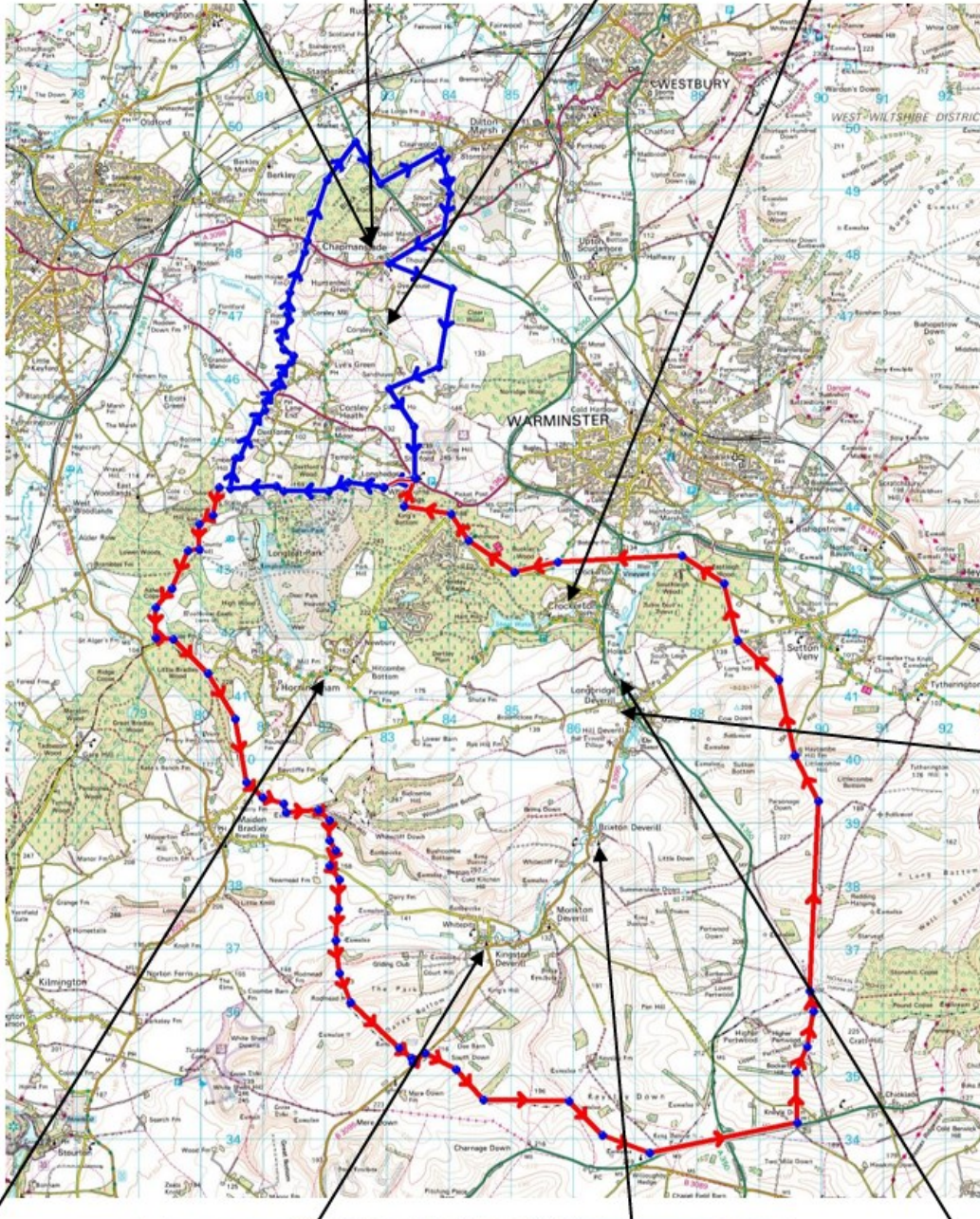
Chapmanslade



Corsley

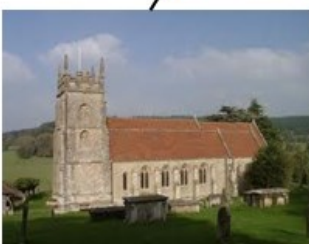


Crockerton School



Rectory

COPYRIGHT OS MAPS



Horningsham



Kingston Deverill



Brixton Deverill



Longbridge Deverill



## **The Parish of The Deverills and Horningsham**

Lying predominantly in the Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the parish of the Deverills and Horningsham comprises a population of approximately 1,800 inhabitants within 3 civil parishes, each with their own Parish Council;

- **Horningsham**
- **The Upper Deverills, consisting of Kingston Deverill, Monkton Deverill and Brixton Deverill**
- **Longbridge Deverill , Hill Deverill and Crockerton**

There are three village halls across the parish—Longbridge Deverill, Kingston Deverill and Horningsham.

There is a service at one of the churches each Sunday, with a BCP eucharist held on the first Sunday of the month as well as Morning Worship. If there is a fifth Sunday in the month a eucharist is held at one of the churches in the Benefice in rotation. The congregation moves between the four churches. During the interregnum the PCCs have worked to deliver the Benefice mission and several retired priests have given their time to continue the normal schedule of services. Music is provided in the Deverill churches by a Hymnal, a local volunteer organist and occasionally by visiting organists.

It is hoped to provide better facilities for at least two of the churches, installing toilets and possibly a small kitchen, in order to make the buildings more useful within the community, especially to those who might not otherwise set foot inside them. Although there are many demands upon the Fabric Funds, the churches are supported by the Friends of the Deverills Churches and have some restricted funds available for major projects.

**The Deverills & Crockerton Parish News** is a church publication containing details of church services, information on local organisations, advertisements for non profit making events in the valley and elsewhere, local news and articles. Volunteers edit and deliver the Parish News to every house in the parish each month and it can also be viewed online at [www.deverills.org.uk](http://www.deverills.org.uk) and [www.cleyhillchurches.org](http://www.cleyhillchurches.org). It is funded from annual voluntary donations and supported by the two Parish Councils within the valley.

## **Kingston and Monkton Deverills**

The civic parish of Kingston Deverill, which since 1934 has included the village of Monkton Deverill, is part of the Deverill Valley. There is a strong connection with King Alfred, and his famous battle against the Danes at Edington. Alfred gathered his forces together at two meeting places, and it is possible that one of these was Court Hill at Kingston Deverill. The Upper Deverills Village Hall is used regularly by many groups and hosts a 'pub night' on the last Friday of each month, which is extremely popular with a wide range of residents, and the monthly Valley Chat community afternoon as well as quiz nights, talks, craft fairs and the annual curry lunch following the Remembrance service. Alongside the Village Hall is the cricket field used by the Upper Deverills Cricket Club.

## **The Church Of Saint Mary the Virgin, Kingston Deverill**

The church was largely rebuilt in the 1840s, although the Tower dates from the 14th century. The Tower has 6 bells that are 'chimed ' by hand. The church has a Saxon Font which was rediscovered having been buried in the churchyard, and there are a number of carvings and monuments including a fine 14th century Flemish wood carving of Madonna and Child.



*Church of St Mary the Virgin*



*Carol Service, Kingston Deverill*

## **Brixton Deverill**

Brixton Deverill is an historic village. Today there are approximately 65 people living in the village, many of whom are retired, but more recently some younger families have joined the community. Agriculture is the main industry in the village with arable and stock farming predominant. There is also some seasonal partridge and pheasant shooting carried out on the surrounding hills. With internet access some residents are working from home, while others commute.

### **The Church Of Saint Michael The Archangel, Brixton Deverill**

This is the smallest church in the parish. The chancel dates from the 13th century, but the church was considerably reworked in the mid 19th century. In keeping with its rural setting, this church lends itself to quiet and contemplation. The church contains some fine wood carvings and a Norman Font which came from the church in Imber. Its picturesque setting makes it popular for smaller weddings. There is one bell, rung for services.



*St Michael the Archangel, Brixton Deverill*



*Interior, Brixton Deverill Church*

## **Longbridge Deverill, Hill Deverill and Crockerton**

Longbridge Deverill, Hill Deverill and Crockerton are separate but adjacent villages. Crockerton and Hill Deverill churches closed several years ago. The church of St Peter and St Paul in Longbridge Deverill is situated between Longbridge and Crockerton. Longbridge Deverill village hall is situated 50yds from the church and has its own committee. A large variety of activities take place in the hall, some associated with church fund raising. Adjacent to Longbridge Deverill village hall lies the James Thynne Almshouse which provides bedsit accommodation for four fee paying residents over the age of 55 from within the parish. The almshouse is administered by a board of trustees.

Longbridge Deverill also has a pub (The George) where there is a monthly community coffee morning, a service station with a small shop and a residential Care Home. Crockerton has a Church of England Primary School, a garden centre, furniture store, gym and a pub, The Bath Arms Shearwater.

The very attractive Shearwater lake lies between Crockerton and Horningsham and provides facilities for anglers and some dinghy sailing. The surrounding woodlands here and elsewhere in the area provide excellent walking.



## The Church Of Saint Peter and Saint Paul at Longbridge Deverill

This is the largest church in the parish. The oldest part is of mid 12th century origin, the south aisle was rebuilt in the 14th century and the whole church was restored and enlarged in the 1860s. The Bell Tower has 8 bells that are rung regularly. The church contains the Bath Chapel under which lies the crypt of the Thynne family of Longleat which used to be in the parish. The church has some interesting furnishings, beautiful stained glass windows and a children's corner.



*St. Peter & St. Paul, Longbridge Deverill*



*School Carol Service at St Peter & St Paul*

## Crockerton School

Crockerton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School is in the parish and has 82 pupils, who work in four mixed age classes . The children come from the local villages, Warminster and beyond.

Our Christian values underpin school life. The school has a broad and balanced curriculum, which has been the focus in the School development plan for the last 2 years, including the assessment of all foundation subjects. The school nurtures strong partnerships with parents, governors, and the wider community and is well supported. Worship for the whole school takes place daily; three times a week as a whole school and once as separate Key stages and on a Tuesday, children meet for their house Worship in vertical groups. The school has a dedicated RE subject leader, who also leads our Church School Values curriculum (PSH) and is also our Mental Well-Being leader. RE is taught by the class teachers. Each term we have a Spirituality Day, based on Christmas, Easter and then a summer reflective day and we try to plan the visits to the church on these occasions.



*Crockerton School*



*Community Carols at The George*

## **Horningsham**

Horningsham is a more widely spread village, the majority of which is owned by the Longleat estate, home of the Safari Park and Center Parcs and has a population of approximately 350. At the centre of the village is the Bath Arms, a very busy, popular pub. There is a large, attractive village hall which is in regular use for the thriving Luncheon Club, cooking weekly for 40 pensioners, keep fit, monthly coffee mornings and the Monday evenings games night. There are also active Cricket and Football Clubs. The whole village is involved in the Annual Fayre, which raises some £6,000 a year to be shared among the village organisations including the Church and the Congregational Chapel. The Chapel is thought to be the oldest congregational chapel in England that is still open for worship, possibly founded in 1556, the date on the building, but more likely around 1700. A Horningsham Residents Association was formed at the beginning of 2024.

The village school is situated quite close to the Church and has around 80 pupils. Although not Church aided the school it maintains active links with the church and uses it for services, including the annual leavers service and the Carol Service.

The monthly Horningsham News magazine, which is delivered free to every household, keeps all the residents informed about life in their village.

### **The Church of St John the Baptist Horningsham**

St John the Baptist Church was founded in 1154 but largely rebuilt firstly in 1783 and then again in 1844 when it was enlarged to make room for an expanding population. Built by the Thynne family of Longleat, it was intended as a place of worship for the many estate workers. A small but active congregation remains today and keeps the building and churchyard in good order.

Key services during the year are Christmas Day and Plough Sunday when the Morris Men attend. Rogation with an open-air service on a farm takes place each year on one of the farms in the parish and Horningsham takes a turn. On Remembrance Sunday there is a service at the war memorial. These services attract a wider congregation from further afield



*Church of St. John the Baptist*



Plough Sunday, Horningsham

## **The Parish of Corsley and Chapmanslade**

The villages of Chapmanslade and Corsley lie in the middle of a triangle of the towns of Westbury, Frome and Warminster. Corsley, which is made up of 11 hamlets on either side of the A362, is situated on the west side between the Longleat Estate and the Somerset border. The 2 villages are about 1 mile apart and are mid-way between the historic cities of Bath and Salisbury. The population of Corsley and Chapmanslade is approximately 1,300. There has been, and still is, a strong connection with farming and horticulture in the area. Small businesses exist in both villages, but neither village has a shop. However, there are four pubs across the Parish. Both villages are socially very active and their occupants very supportive of one another. There is a church school in Chapmanslade and pre-schools in both villages.

### **Corsley**

Corsley is a large rural village within the Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, it was once part of the ancient Forest of Selwood. National Trust owned Cley Hill, the site of an ancient British Fort is a prominent landmark in the east of the parish. Agriculture is still a major feature of parish life and in the past the wool industry was of much significance. Today, most residents commute to work in local towns or are retired. Local employers include a garden centre. Despite the scattered settlement pattern there is a strong and supportive community spirit, with an active WI, tennis and other sports clubs, a reading room which hosts many social occasions including a monthly coffee morning. The church community organise a monthly Lite Bites lunch, which is held in the Reading Rooms and is open to everyone. There is a lovely community wildflower meadow close to the church. Primary school children attend Chapmanslade School or other local schools and secondary education is provided at Kingdown School in Warminster. On the edge of Corsley is Centre Parcs. There have been a few new houses built in Corsley, mainly for local people.

### **St Margaret's, Corsley**

St Margaret's, a site of worship since the 12th century, is the largest of the Parish churches and the present church dates from the 1830s. There are 2 services each month, a Common Worship Eucharist service and a Matins service. It enjoys a regular congregation of about 20 for Sunday worship and the church is often nearly full to its 250 capacity for larger services such as weddings and funerals. The church has a set of bells that are regularly rung by a dedicated team of ringers. The church has a small kitchen and two toilets. We have a part-time organist. Internet facilities and other related equipment is being installed to make the church more usable by the community. The church has good acoustics and is used for choir concerts.



*Church of St. Margaret*



*Christmas Tree Festival, Corsley*



## **Chapmanslade**

Chapmanslade is situated a mile north of Corsley, along the main road between Westbury and Frome. The village is largely a dormitory village for people working in nearby towns and beyond. Horticulture is a significant employer and there is a small industrial estate. The village is growing with a 42-house development built within the last two years. There is a new café and entertainment space on a former golf club on the edge of the village. There is also a complex of luxury holiday homes just outside the village.

Chapmanslade has a strong community spirit; it has a popular village hall which hosts a wide range of community events, including a pantomime, music evening and many meetings of organisations like the Brownies and Guides. A women's group (the "Loose Women") meets to participate in a full range of social activities and events. Each month, too, the pub hosts the church and community coffee morning, giving everyone in the village another opportunity to meet socially.

There is a church organised activity called Crafternoons once a fortnight, where all are welcome to bring their own craft projects to work on, in a supportive and creative atmosphere.

### **St Philip and St James', Chapmanslade**

St Philip and St James' construction began in 1866 and was consecrated on 1<sup>st</sup> May 1867. Situated in the centre of the village with the school next door, the church and school have a very good relationship. Average service attendances are around 25, with more attendees on special services e.g. Harvest and Christmas Crib Services. There are 2 services a month, a Common Worship Eucharist service and a family orientated Praise & Worship service. We do not have a regular organist so pre-recorded music is played via speakers. We have recently begun to redevelop the church; the first step was replacing some of the listed pews with chairs. This creates a much more flexible space. A temporary toilet has been installed. Plans for the future include a permanent toilet and drink making facility, with the aim of making it into a wider community space. A local choir use the church weekly for their rehearsals and the village panto group also rehearse in the church. Internet facilities and other related equipment have been installed to aid the delivery of the Praise and Worship service as well as make the church more usable by the community. Fund raising is supported with the use of an on-line donation device.

There is a Church Porch Food Bank in the porch at St Philip and St James, providing some essential food items to anyone who may need them. We have plans for more coffee mornings and a Toddler Group, when we have the facilities to be able to hold them.



*Church of St. Philip & St. James*



*Gathering following Remembrance Service*



## **Chapmanslade Church of England VA Primary School; (now part of Acorn Education Trust)**

The 100 pupil village school sits together with the Church and Busy Bees Pre-school in the centre of the village.

The recent SIAMS inspection which took place in October 2024 reported:

*'Collective worship takes place at the start of each afternoon.'*

*'Leaders in school work with local retired clergy and members of the parish church to build a worship plan. This includes dramatic retelling of Bible stories, songs, prayer, class worship and times for reflection. This enables worship to be joined to the wider Anglican tradition and brings them to the heart of the local worshipping community.'*

*'Pupils are enthusiastic contributors to the design and leadership of worship.'*

*'Regular events in the local parish church are extremely important to parents, pupils and staff. The relationship with the local parish is warm and neighbourly. Highly committed volunteers work closely with school leaders to create a welcoming space for school events.'* The PCC is also fully aware of its responsibilities towards the provision of Foundation Governors, however this will change to some extent with the move to Trust status.

### **Parish wide activities**

The two villages have a monthly magazine called The Bridge, which is delivered free of charge to all houses in the villages. The church uses its central pages to communicate all our essential information with everyone in the parish. The PCC has a strong fund raising team which coordinate various parish wide activities through the year. The Benefice runs a Messy Tent and attends various village events including

### **FINANCE**

Our 6 historic Grade 2 listed churches are valued by our communities, requiring significant maintenance costs. They are supported financially with their own parish 'Friends of their Churches' and planned giving schemes. Both parishes paid their full Parish Share each year up to 2020. Throughout COVID both parishes struggled only paying some 60% of share in the next 3 years. However, both parishes are striving towards paying 100% of the 2024 share and are close to achieving this .

### **CLERGY AND SUPPORT**

The Cley Hill Benefice, with its 2 parishes, mostly work independently of each other, but they do share resources and join together for Benefice services in 5 week months and some festivals.

There are 3 retired priests who live in the parish of Corsley and Chapmanslade, who routinely lead Sunday worship and Eucharist services, baptisms, wedding and funerals services throughout the Benefice. There is one Lay Minister in the Deverills and Horningsham who leads worship, mostly in his own parish but occasionally throughout the Benefice, and conducts funerals in all the churches. Throughout the Vacancy each parish has been supported by a number of retired priests from Warminster.

Each parish has its own active PCC with secretary and treasurer.

In Corsley and Chapmanslade's two churches there is one churchwarden. In the Deverills and Horningsham's four churches there are three with churchwardens and one church with a team of 5 couples who are deputy church wardens and serve a month at a time.

### **SAFEGUARDING**

Benefice Safeguarding Officer Sarah Humberstone ensures we comply with all requirements.

## The Rectory – Longbridge Deverill (BA12 7DQ)

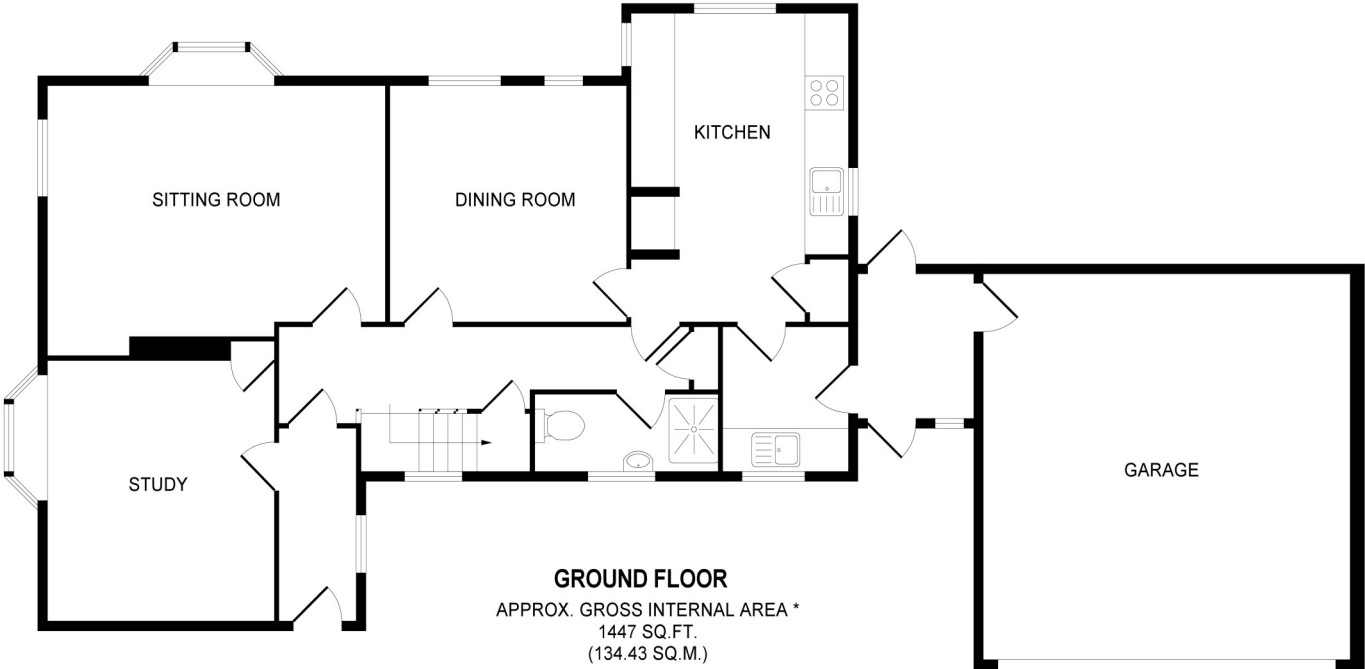
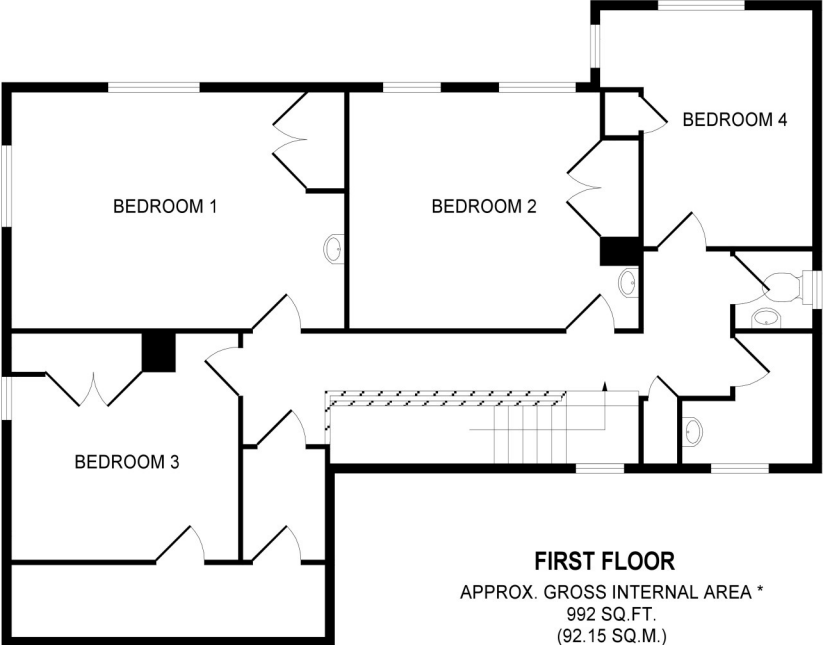
The four bedroom house was built in 1973 and its design reflects the style of that period although it has been regularly modernised in recent years. It stands in a large south facing garden with views across the Deverill Valley over farmland up to Lord's Hill. There are some mature trees but otherwise it is rather empty, offering a keen gardener the opportunity to create a garden of their own taste.

Comfortable family accommodation is provided with a large sitting room, dining room, study, toilet, shower and modern kitchen on the ground floor with three double bedrooms and a single bedroom and bathroom and toilet upstairs. A new shower has been added upstairs where the wash basin seen in bedroom 2 is on the plans. The house has been regularly maintained.

The house stands at the end of a cul-de-sac adjacent to several bungalows and mainly small houses, all built around the same period and is close to (but not too close to) The George, a thriving pub, which stands on the main road, opposite which is a filling station and shop which is open daily. The church of St Peter and St Paul, the largest church in the valley and the focus of many of the principal services is a 10 minute walk away. Longbridge Deverill Village Hall is located in the lane leading to the church.



# RECTORY FLOOR PLANS



**TOTAL APPROX. GROSS INTERNAL AREA 2439 SQ.FT. (226.59 SQ.M)**

**Illustration For Identification Purposes Only. Not To Scale**