



DIOCESE of OXFORD

A Christ-like Church for the sake of God's world



Penn Street with Holmer Green Parish Profile 2020



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Foreword from the Archdeacon of Buckingham

Penn Street and Holmer Green is unusual in that it is a single parish spanning two villages. There is a traditional and a contemporary worshipping community, both of which are faithful, gently Jesus-focused and ready to move forward with a new Vicar.

The benefice is at an exciting stage in its journey. The potential for new housing development and the discussions about the redevelopment of the church site at Holmer Green, which will include relocating the Vicarage, could be a 'kairos' moment for mission in this community and growth in the church. Strong connections have been developed with the Church school in Penn Street and there is potential both to imagine creative ways to develop the church's relationship with the school and to build stronger relationships with the schools in Holmer Green.

For a priest who is Christ-focused, community facing and keen to work with people and develop missional leadership, this post offers a good opportunity to grow a thriving church community. The new Vicar will be committed to the diocesan vision of becoming a more Christ-like Church for the sake of God's World – contemplative, compassionate and courageous – and to working with others to imagine new ways of growing the church in these communities.

I commend this profile to you and I would welcome conversations about the role with interested candidates.



Ven Guy Elsmore,
Archdeacon of Buckingham

Introduction

Welcome to the parish of Penn Street with Holmer Green, and thank you for your interest in becoming our new vicar.

This Parish Profile will give you a sense of who we are, and the opportunities and challenges we see ahead of us. We are hopeful and excited about our future and we pray that God will help you discern whether you are the new vicar God is calling to lead us in mission and ministry in the years ahead.

The cover picture was created by a pupil at Curzon C of E Combined School. The children were asked to tell us what they want from our new vicar and the combination of the image of the Cross, with (centrally) Jesus, King of kings, Almighty God, Everlasting Father, with Faith, Hope and Joy, along with Heaven, Dove, and "Away in a manger" pretty well sums up what we are looking for.

Who we are - in brief

We are a single parish in south Buckinghamshire covering the two village communities of Penn Street and Holmer Green. We are very much a single supportive Christian community worshipping across three buildings and two village communities. Most of our worship and church activity takes place in the larger community of Holmer Green, with occasional services at “the church in the woods” at Penn Street. We are excited about the future and the potential of our spiritual family and look forward to welcoming our new vicar with open hearts. Discussions are in progress with the diocese and the deanery about an exciting plan for redevelopment of the site beside the Church Centre at Holmer Green. This will include demolition of the derelict, old Parsonage House, and building a new Vicarage so the vicar can live in a central place for the life of the parish. This will provide more opportunities to integrate with the local community and be involved in village activities.



Our vision

We want our church to be a place where we are excited to come and worship God together and be joyful in His presence. We want to make services fun and the church a vibrant, safe and welcoming place for people of all ages and backgrounds.

Our vision statement is:

***To release, support, enable and encourage God's people
to receive his grace, share His love, and to live His life***

In 2014, the PCC agreed a Mission Action Plan (MAP). We reviewed and updated our MAP in June 2017 and we recognise that we now have an opportunity to build on this work and to discern our vision and mission for the years ahead.

Strengths, opportunities and challenges

During the vacancy the PCC discussed and began to identify our strengths and opportunities and our aspirations for the future. We followed this up with an open afternoon consultation to enable more of our church members, and those on the fringe of the church to contribute to the conversation. We have distilled the results of our discussions into the following lists of strengths, opportunities and challenges. We are looking forward to taking this work further with our new vicar and to discerning where God is calling us for the next phase of our ministry and mission.

Our strengths:	Our opportunities:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are a welcoming and friendly church • We are a close knit and caring Christian community • The experience, skills and commitment of our congregation • Bible based teaching focused on the teaching of Jesus Christ • Lay led all-age services • Some thriving outreach events, such as 'Souper Lunch' and cream teas • Strong ecumenical links with Baptist and Methodist churches in Holmer Green 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the vicar to be more visible and have a higher profile in the local community • To develop relationships with our local schools • To develop our ministry through weddings, baptisms and funerals • Potential for outreach into possible new housing developments • To establish a new congregation, e.g. on a Sunday evening • Redevelopment of the church site at Holmer Green

We recognise that in order to build on our strengths and take the opportunities for mission we see we will also need to address these **challenges**:

- The same people do all the work
- Our congregation not growing as fast as we would like
- An ageing congregation
- Drawing children and younger people into the Church
- Our finances are increasingly stretched, with greater demands on a smaller base of regular givers

What we want to do

Based on our work so far, we believe our mission for the next 3 - 5 years is to:

- build on our outreach to families
- become a more visible presence in the wider community
- identify and respond to opportunities for mission
- encourage the congregation to grow and develop in their personal faith
- encourage, train and equip more lay worship leaders
- continue to welcome everyone into our congregation
- transform our buildings and car parking facilities

We look forward to exploring our calling further under the leadership of our new vicar and to working together to realise our aspirations.

Our new vicar

We are praying for a new vicar who is Spirit-filled and:

- has a firm, Bible based faith with Jesus at the centre and is able to preach and teach from scripture in a variety of styles
- will take an active part in engaging with local schools
- will help us develop our vision for the future and grow our church
- will work with volunteers, develop our lay leadership and collaborate with the other Christian churches in our area
- will actively engage with individuals and organisations who have limited church involvement
- will be welcoming, able to engage with, and offer pastoral support to everyone
- will support our redevelopment plans

We will offer you:

- our prayer, friendship and fellowship
- our encouragement to maintain a sustainable ministry
- shared commitment to meeting our challenges
- the opportunity to work with us in shaping the redevelopment of the church site at Holmer Green, including the new Vicarage

Our church

We are a caring, enthusiastic and prayerful church community, about 50% of whom live within the parish. We enjoy worshipping and socialising together and many are active in their commitment to the ministry and mission of the church.

A lot of work has been done to encourage and bring in younger adults and families to join our church and we have been pleased to see an increase in the number of families joining us in recent years. We recognise, too, that our congregations are mainly over 50s with only a small number of families. We hope our new vicar will help us to build on these encouraging signs of growth.

We have various successful groups and outreach activities, most of which take place in the Church Centre. We are fortunate to have several committed groups of volunteers who work as teams:

- Three active Home Groups, meeting monthly
- Link-up, a bereavement friendship group, meeting once a month
- Women's Fellowship, meeting twice each month
- Tiddlywinks, a group for babies, toddlers and pre-school children accompanied by their parents or carers, which meets during term time
- Cream Teas
- 'Souper Lunches' twice a month which attract several non-church members
- Short Mat Bowls is played weekly and bring together church and non-church players
- Once a month we organise a service in the local elderly persons care home, Cherry Garth
- Home communions are arranged when necessary and are conducted by authorised laity



"Souper Lunch"

Worship

There are two services every Sunday, all currently held in Holmer Green, with a variety of liturgical styles and traditions. We use the Book of Common Prayer, Common Worship, informal worship and All-age services. We have a small Children's Church once or twice a month and are very eager to attract more young families into our Church.

1 st Sunday	09.00am 10.30am	Holy Communion * Family Worship and Children's Church	Christ Church Church Centre
2 nd Sunday	09.00am 10.30am	Morning Worship Morning Worship	Christ Church Church Centre
3 rd Sunday	09.00am 10.30am	Holy Communion * Holy Communion * with occasional Children's Church	Christ Church Church Centre
4 th Sunday	09.00am 10.30am	BCP Morning Worship All Age Worship (lay led)	Christ Church Church Centre
5 th Sunday	09.00am 10.30am	Morning Worship Praise and Worship	Christ Church Church Centre

* Common Worship

Holy Trinity, Penn Street is currently used for worship at festivals, high days and special occasions and occasionally for school services by Curzon C of E School.

We have an organist who plays for the traditional services at 9am and a Worship Group leads the music at the 10.30am contemporary service each week.

In recent years it has not been our practice for the priest to wear vestments for worship, although some members of the traditional congregation like simple vestments to be worn on occasions.

From the registers

Year	Average Sunday attendance	Electoral roll *	Baptisms	Weddings	Funerals/burials
2017	69	87	3	6	20
2018	59	94	1	3	17
2019	53	91	4	3	12

The Parish benefits from the services of a part-time, paid, administrator with an office in the Church Centre and a paid cleaner who services the Church Centre.

Ecumenical links

There are two other Christian Churches in Holmer Green – the Baptists and the Methodists – and the three churches work together under the umbrella of ACTS (All Churches Together Serving).

Our buildings and churchyards

The parish has two church buildings and a Church Centre adjacent to the church in Holmer Green. Each church has its own churchyard, both of which are open. We currently have no plans to reorder our church buildings.

Holy Trinity, Penn Street



The parish church at Penn Street is Holy Trinity, also known as the 'Church in the woods', is a Grade II listed building built in 1849 by the first Earl Howe. The current Earl (15th) is the Patron of the church. The church itself has featured in such television productions as Midsomer Murders.



The church seats 230 and is adjacent to Penn Woods, which is popular with walkers. Each summer between May and September we serve home-made cream teas in the church and



churchyard. These have become very popular with visitors and provide good opportunities for outreach and a welcome source of income for church finances.

Christ Church, Holmer Green



Christ Church is a Chapel-of-Ease built in 1894. It has seating for 80.



All items highlighted in the last quinquennial report have been addressed.

Church Centre, Holmer Green

Our Church Centre is adjacent to the church building. The facilities include a hall, two smaller rooms, two kitchens and toilet facilities. Upstairs is the Church Office, vicar's office and a quiet room. There is plenty of space for car parking.



The Church Centre is used for our weekly contemporary worship and hosts many other activities. It is let to various groups from the local community throughout the week and is one of the significant revenue streams for the parish.

There is an additional, disused, building adjacent to the Church Centre which will be demolished as part of the redevelopment.



Organisation and Finance

Churchwardens and PCC

We have two active Churchwardens, a very committed PCC and a good team of volunteers who organise various activities.

We have a PCC of 14 members which oversees the life of the church and our three buildings. We meet at least 8 times a year.

PCC meetings are currently chaired by a lay chairman and assisted by a secretary. We look forward to the vicar chairing these meetings again. The meetings are always well attended and are conducted in good humour.

Finance and giving

This year we paid our parish share fully again, amounting to £66,761 which represents some 63% of our unrestricted income.

We are roughly on track with our budget for this year and our expenditure is kept well in check. We had a number of years where projects, repairs, replacing items were putting a serious strain on our finances. Now all the major issues have been resolved we can start to build a more secure financial footing. Our income and expenditure closely mirror each other on an annual basis but they also stay fairly static.

We have had a fairly steady flat line reoccurrence of income and expenditure for the last financial year to Dec 2019. Unadjusted unrestricted income £104,376 vs unadjusted unrestricted expenditure £105,215 meant a deficit of £839, a £2,000 improvement on the previous year.

Income generation remains challenging. The congregation are very supportive and help to raise, or donate funds. Throughout the year we endeavour to host events to raise further funds and one of our most successful is the Cream Teas at Holy Trinity.

We have recently joined the Parish Giving Scheme and this has already helped our monthly cash-flow situation now that we receive Gift Aid each month instead of once a year.

Safeguarding

Our Parish follows the Diocese of Oxford guidance on Safeguarding. APCS is our umbrella organisation for DBS checks.

Our communities and wider area

The Benefice is located in the Chiltern Hills (designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) in Buckinghamshire and lies approximately 30 miles west of London.

With a population of just over 4000, **Holmer Green** is considered to be a relatively affluent area and has a low rate of unemployment. The village has a range of local shops providing most day to day needs and a café which is a very popular meeting place for local people. The Royal British Legion has a thriving branch in Holmer Green and has close associations with the church. There is also a sports centre.

Penn Street is a rural village of mainly one road, with a population of ca. 800. There are two pubs and a common. The common is used for cricket during the summer months and, behind the common, lies Penn Wood. This is one of the largest ancient woodlands in the Chilterns which was acquired by the Woodland Trust in 1999.

Amersham and High Wycombe are the nearest main towns and shopping centres with most of the main stores and retail parks easily accessible. As well as many restaurants and pubs, there are 2 multiplex cinemas in High Wycombe and a large leisure complex. There are many thriving sports clubs in and around the area as well as a League One Football Team.

Holmer Green is served by a [pre-school and a first school](#), a [junior school](#) and a secondary school for pupils of 11-18 years of age, [Holmer Green Senior School](#), which has Academy status. Penn Street has a [pre-school](#) and [Curzon Church of England Combined School](#). All the schools have a current Ofsted grade of 'Good'.

There are good road links, with the M4, M25 and M40 easily accessible. The A404 (High Wycombe to Amersham) runs between the villages. There are regular bus services to High Wycombe and Amersham with good interconnections to the rail network and London Underground. Journey times into London Marylebone from High Wycombe are approximately 40 minutes.

Buckinghamshire Healthcare is responsible for the 3 main hospitals in the area: at Amersham, High Wycombe and Stoke Mandeville (near Aylesbury). There are 3 Accident and Emergency Departments serving the area: Stoke Mandeville, John Radcliffe (Oxford) and Wexham Park (Slough).

The vicarage

The current vicarage is a detached 1960s 4 x bedroomed Georgian style house in the picturesque village of Penn Street, near the parish church and the local church school.



Vicarage - front view

Rear of vicarage - parish garden party

The Vicarage has central heating and consists of a:

- short entrance leading to the hallway from the front door.
- south-facing lounge, with wood-burning stove, and adjacent dining room, both with access to the rear garden and patio area.
- kitchen facing onto the front garden with access to a utility area through which the garage can be accessed. There is access to both front garden from the passage, and rear garden from the garage.
- single car garage, with space in front of the garage up and over door for one small car. There is a gate allowing vehicular access to the edge of the rear garden.
- downstairs toilet, accessed from the hall.
- separate front entrance serves the study.

On the first floor there are:

- four bedrooms, (3 of them south-facing) each with built in wardrobes. The master bedroom has a washbasin.
- a bathroom with shower over the bath
- a separate toilet
- an airing cupboard
- access to the loft, where there is generous storage space.

The vicarage is protected by an alarm system.

There is internet access.

The vicarage and gardens are set in beautiful woodland. There is a large rear garden laid to grass, and smaller front garden, again laid to grass. To the west of the Vicarage is a natural grass area, and large wooded area. Access to the Vicarage is from the main road which runs through Penn Street. There is parking for three cars in front of the house.

Holy Trinity Church is a 200 metre walk from the Vicarage.

Amersham Deanery

The Benefice of Penn Street and Holmer Green is an important part of the Amersham Deanery touching on several smaller parishes. Rt Hon Earl Howe is the patron of the parish. The Deanery is one of the largest and almost certainly the wealthiest in the Diocese. However, while many households could be described as 'comfortable' there are patches of significantly less prosperous housing, notably in Chesham.

There is an excellent spirit of cooperation between all the parishes in the deanery, and the clergy chapter is strong. The two Area co-Deans and the assistant Area Dean aim to provide pastoral care and supervision for incumbents, and can be relied on to provide a listening ear, help and advice, whenever needed.

The Deanery website can be found at <http://www.amershamdeanery.org.uk/index.html>

The Diocese of Oxford



The Diocese of Oxford serves the mission of the Church in Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Oxfordshire. The Diocese comprises more than 600 parishes, with over 800 churches, serving a diverse population of more than 2 million people located in all types of settings.

Due to the size and complexity of the Diocese, we have three Area Bishops who exercise considerable strategic and pastoral oversight for their Areas. The Bishop of Buckingham is the Rt Rev'd Alan Wilson who has been the Area Bishop since 2003. The Archdeacon of Buckingham is Ven Guy Elsmore who has been in post since 2016.

Since the appointment in 2017 of the Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft as Bishop of Oxford, a new common vision has emerged for the Diocese of Oxford. The vision is based on the qualities described in The Beatitudes and addresses what kind of church we are called to be:

**a more Christ-like Church for the sake of God's world:
contemplative, compassionate, courageous.**

Together we have identified five themes for our common life. These are not a description of everything the Church does, but they do represent the areas God is currently calling us to:

- Making a bigger difference in the world
- Catechesis and discipleship
- Growing new congregations
- Serving schools, children and young people
- Celebrate and Bless Milton Keynes

These priorities are being supported centrally by resources, training, conferences, workshops, and much more. The diocese is inviting benefices and their priests to share a vision rather than demanding a response. It wants all its clergy to flourish in ministry and to deepen their enjoyment of God.

It is hoped that all clergy appointed into the Archdeaconry of Buckingham will want to commit to the Diocesan vision and to encouraging their benefices to share in becoming a more Christ-like church for the sake of God's world.

Appendix A

The following provisional role description will apply from the date of licensing. It will be reviewed by the postholder and the Archdeacon of Buckingham approximately six months after the date of licensing. Amendments will be made where necessary, by agreement.

PROVISIONAL ROLE DESCRIPTION

SECTION ONE: DETAILS OF POST

Role title:	Priest-in-Charge
Type of Role:	Full time stipendiary
Name of benefice:	Penn Street with Holmer Green
Episcopal area:	Buckingham
Deanery:	Amersham
Archdeaconry:	Buckingham
Conditions of Service:	Please refer to Statements of Particulars document issued in conjunction with this role description
Key contact for	Archdeacon of Buckingham
Clergy Terms of Service:	This role falls within the Clergy Terms of Service formally known as Common Tenure. The Archdeacon of Buckingham is the designated person by the Bishop of Oxford to issue the Statement of Particulars for the post holder.
Accountability:	Priests share with the Bishop in the oversight of the Church. Whilst, as an office holder, the individual is expected to lead and prioritise work in line with the purpose of the role, they are encouraged to inform the Archdeacon and Churchwardens about any issues exceptional or otherwise that have the potential to affect ongoing delivery of ministry
Additional Responsibility:	N/A

SECTION TWO: CONTEXT

Wider Context

Since the appointment in 2017 of the Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft as Bishop of Oxford, a new common vision has emerged for the Diocese of Oxford. The vision is based on the qualities described in The Beatitudes and addresses what kind of church we are called to be:

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These priorities are being supported centrally by resources, training, conferences, workshops, and much more. The diocese is inviting benefices and their priests to share a vision rather than demanding a response. It wants all its clergy to flourish in ministry and to deepen their enjoyment of God.

Local Context

This is a single parish in south Buckinghamshire covering the two village communities of Penn Street and Holmer Green. We are very much a single supportive Christian community worshipping across three buildings and two village communities. Most of our worship and church activity takes place in the larger community of Holmer Green, with occasional services at Penn Street. We are excited about the future and the potential of our spiritual family here Penn Street with Holmer Green and look forward to welcoming our new vicar with open hearts.

Discussions are taking place with the diocese and the deanery about an exciting plan for redevelopment of the site beside the Church Centre at Holmer Green. This will include building a new Vicarage so the incumbent can live in a central place for the life of the parish. This will provide more opportunities for the new incumbent to integrate with the local community, to be involved in village activities and to work together with the other churches. We envisage this move will provide opportunities for us to develop our outreach in Holmer Green. We hope this redevelopment will be completed within the next 18 months.

For more information, see the parish profile.

SECTION THREE: ROLE PURPOSE AND KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

General:

- A. To exercise the cure of souls shared with the bishop in this benefice in collaboration with colleagues, including the praying of the Daily Office, the administration of the sacraments and preaching
- B. To have regard to the calling and responsibilities of the clergy (as described in the Canons, the Ordinal, the Code of Professional Conduct for the Clergy) and other relevant legislation including
 - bringing the grace and truth of Christ to this generation and making him known to those in your care
 - instructing the parishioners in the Christian faith
 - preparing candidates for baptism and confirmation
 - diligently visiting the parishioners of the benefice, particularly those who are sick and infirm
 - providing spiritual counsel and advice
 - consulting with the Parochial Church Council on matters of general concern and importance to the benefice
 - bringing the needs of the world before God in intercession
 - calling your hearers to repentance and declaring in Christ's name the absolution and forgiveness of their sins
 - blessing people in God's name
 - preparing people for their death
 - discerning and fostering the gifts of all God's people
 - being faithful in prayer, expectant and watchful for the signs of God's presence, as he reveals his kingdom among us
- C. To share in the wider work of the deanery and diocese as appropriate, for the building up of the whole Body of Christ

Key responsibilities specific to the local situation

- has a firm, Bible based faith with Jesus at the centre and is able to preach and teach from scripture in a variety of styles
- will take an active part in engaging with local schools
- will help us develop our vision for the future and grow our church
- will work with volunteers, develop our lay leadership and collaborate with the other Christian churches in our area
- will actively engage with individuals and organisations who have limited church involvement
- will be welcoming, able to engage with, and offer pastoral support to everyone
- will support our redevelopment plans

Other responsibilities

- Participate in the Bishop's Ministerial Development Review scheme and engage in Continuing Ministerial Development
- Carry out any other duties and responsibilities as required in line with the benefice needs.
- Take care for their wellbeing including health and safety and building a good repertoire of spiritual and psychological strategies

SECTION FOUR: BENEFICE SUMMARY

The Benefice of

Benefice: Penn Street with Holmer Green

Patron(s): Rt Hon Earl Howe

PCCs: 1

Churchwardens: 2 (Mr Michael Batchelor & Mr Robert Duerdoth)

Benefice paid staff: 1 (Mrs Susan Kinnon, Parish Secretary (p/t))

Buildings: 3

Churchyard(s): 2 (open)

Church Tradition: Low church, open evangelical

Pastoral Reorganisation proposals: None at present

For more detailed information, please refer to the Parish Profile.

SECTION FIVE: KEY CONTACTS FOR THE ROLE

Generic and specific to the role

Groups & committees

- The PCC
- Deanery Chapter
- Deanery Synod
- Deanery Pastoral Committee

In the benefice

- Churchwardens
- Ministerial Colleagues
- Head teacher(s) of local school(s)

Support structures

- Area Dean
- Area Bishop
- Area Archdeacon
- Spiritual director, work consultant, etc
- Staff at The Diocesan Office with key responsibilities for various aspects of supporting

SECTION SIX: OTHER

This role description is issued alongside and should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

The Ordinal

The Canons of the Church of England

Guidance for the Professional Conduct of Clergy

Bishop's Licence

Statement of Particulars issued to the office-holder on successful appointment

Diocesan Clergy Handbook

Parish Profile

Ministry Action Plans (MAPs)

Any objectives discussed and agreed between the post holder and the supervising minister

Role description signed off by: The Venerable Guy Elsmore, Archdeacon of Buckingham

Date:

Date:

tba

To be reviewed next on:

tba