

The Marlborough Deanery consists of sixteen parishes with nineteen churches. It is in a corner of the Salisbury Diocese, adjoining Bristol Diocese to the north and Oxford Diocese to the east. The town of Marlborough with reasonably good shopping facilities is the focus for much of the Deanery, but four of the parishes have Swindon postcodes and tend to 'look both ways' while another two are closer to Hungerford. The Deanery is divided into four Benefices: Upper Kennet and Ridgeway have one stipendiary priest each; Whitton has two; and Marlborough also has two (one of whom also has responsibility across the Deanery for Lay Training) and a Training Curacy. As a Deanery we value our OLM priest, retired clergy, Licensed Lay Ministers, Lay Pastoral Assistants and all who share in ministry.

DRAFT

MARLBOROUGH DEANERY PLAN 2007

	<u>PRE</u>	<u>ER</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SAC</u>
<u>Marlborough</u>				
Marlborough	4172	248	160	B
Preshute	1297	170	105	C
Mildenhall	368	68	32	B
<u>Whitton</u>				
Ramsbury & Axford	1463	145	112	B
Aldbourne	1366	130	88	B
Baydon	391	49	47	D
Chilton Foliat	259	60	38	C
Froxfield	292	15	14	E
<u>Ridgeway</u>				
Chiseldon	2077	109	79	C
Ogbourne St Andrew	301	46	26	C
Ogbourne St George	310	63	33	C
<u>Upper Kennet</u>				
Avebury	452	18	22	B
Broad Hinton	483	45	40	C
Overton, Fyfield, EK	717	27	38	C
W'bourne Bassett	91	33	16	C
W'bourne Monkton	165	14	17	C

PRE = Parliamentary Register of Electors
 ER = Parish Electoral Roll
 M = Membership for Diocesan Share Apportionment
 SAC = Self-assessment category for Diocesan Share

Christians worship one God who shows himself to us in three ways.

God is the Creator of the universe. From the tiniest flower to the vast galaxies of space, the wonders of the universe reflect the glory of God who made them.

The character of God is shown in Jesus of Nazareth who lived in Palestine in the first century. He is the 'human face of God'.

His readiness to give himself unsparingly in the service of others and his willingness to sacrifice his life demonstrate God's love for us.

God is with us in Spirit today, lively and active in the human community, inspiring us, challenging us, guiding us, if we let him.

Our Mission Statement:

Christians are called to :

Worship *God the creator and offer the whole of our lives to God in thankfulness for all God's love and goodness revealed to us in Jesus Christ.*

Witness *for Christ in the world and to spread the Good News of the gospel so that others may come to know and love him.*

Work *for the coming of God's Kingdom. Empowered by the Holy Spirit we seek to serve God in the community, at home and in our daily lives.*

Common Vision

We share a vision for the Deanery of parish churches which have strong links in the communities which they serve and provide a focus for worship and spiritual discovery, enabling people of all ages to come to faith, to discern God's will, and to find their own roles in Church and community

Common Opportunities

Priorities which are shared by all the parishes are:

- Mission – To recognize where God is already at work and encourage people to make further connections of their own. Building on the existing contacts we have through schools and other institutions.
- Shared Ministry – To encourage members to recognise and accept their own unique ministries in sharing responsibility for the varied life of the church, and to provide appropriate training and accreditation.
- Structures – To find ways to adapt existing structures of church administration to make the ways we operate more flexible or 'Mission Shaped'
- Finance – Drawing on the important role that church buildings have in a community, (how the building can act as the hem of the Lord's garment) to tap into an ever-wider community to finance and support their maintenance
- Small Groups – Aware of the changing patterns of working and social life, develop work with small groups alongside different times and styles of worship.

Common Concerns

Concerns which are shared by all the parishes are:

- Membership – That congregations are gradually diminishing, and that there are sections within the church and wider communities which have very different needs (eg: elderly traditional; young liberal)
- Workload – That the clergy are significantly overloaded, especially with a growing administrative workload
- Finance – That cash reserves are disappearing fast while both 'Share' and building maintenance costs are rising

- Buildings – The financial and administrative cost of church buildings is considerable, but there is also the concern that we are 'over-churched' and that this hinders us from developing invigorating and infectious worship.

Resource Implications

The Benefices recognise that future ministry needs to be resourced from within the Deanery. Identifying future resources can only flow from a process of fostering vocations.

Common Responses

The Benefices are actively exploring:

- Shared Training – Collaborating in the provision of all forms of lay training (lectors, intercessors, study group leaders, PCC members, etc) to deepen faith and grow confident Christians
- Shared Resources – Making particular expertise/skills available to other Benefices/Parishes in the Deanery
- Diocesan Training Provision – Making greater use of courses and training days organised at Diocesan level

Ecumenical Issues

The three Marlborough parishes are linked in a longstanding ecumenical partnership with Christchurch (Methodist and URC), St Thomas More (RC), the Friends' Meeting (Quakers) and Marlborough College. The full-time Youth Officer based in Christchurch works for the whole town. St Mary's and Christchurch hold joint Confirmation services at which candidates join both the Anglican and Methodist churches.

Two of the six Whitton churches have informal ecumenical Covenants with the local Methodist chapels. A significant difficulty is that there is relatively little overlap between the geographical areas of responsibility for the Anglican and Methodist ministers.

Ridgeway Benefice has a good ecumenical relationship with the Methodists and share worship regularly. Upper Kennet Benefice also work ecumenically with the URC Chapel in Avebury.

