



# Verwood Parish Profile

# Church and Community

## Our Recent Christmas Tree

Festival

Co-Hosted with

Verwoodians

On Waste



# Church and Community



Choral Concert



Angel Festival



All Saints Coffee and Cakes



Wedding Dress Festival

# Introduction to the Vacancy by the Bishop of Sherborne

This post offers an excellent opportunity for the right candidate to bring their own skills and gifts to a welcoming, and lively parish.

Verwood and Three Legged Cross in the Wimborne Deanery enjoy both a rural and suburban outlook, with the New Forest in one direction and the beaches of Hampshire and Dorset in another. With the towns of Ringwood, Bournemouth, Poole and Salisbury all close at hand. There are good transport links directly to the M27 and then to the A34 northwards and M3 to London.

We are looking for a priest who can build on all that is already happening in the parish, to make the most of the opportunities available and to develop the congregation in an outward direction, so the varied worship pattern can continue to attract newcomers and they be led on in their faith. Engagement with all ages and the local community is important, as the church seeks to grow younger and there are many opportunities to develop this work.

The deanery is extremely supportive and has worked hard in recent years to embrace both the suburban and rural. The deanery has a clear plan and good leadership.

Whilst on the edge of the Salisbury diocese, Verwood and Three Legged Cross has very much adopted the values of the Salisbury diocese, seeing its calling to make Jesus known.

There are good links with neighbouring parishes, and opportunities for joint working on the south eastern edge of the Salisbury diocese. Someone experienced in discipleship and lay leadership would fit well here to enable the congregation make the most of the many local opportunities for mission and ministry.

In turn the parish offers a well-appointed vicarage, some excellent schools and leisure activities for all ages on the doorstep, including Moors Valley Country Park. Ministry in Dorset is rewarding and enjoyable. In recent years significant changes have been made in the way clergy are supported and encouraged, leading to a greater sense of collegiality. Should you wish to know more about this post please do not hesitate to pay a discrete visit to take a look around or contact the Archdeacon of Dorset, the Ven Penny Sayer (01305 269074).

We look forward to hearing from you

*Bishop Karen*



# Introduction to the Vacancy by our Rural Dean

The parish of Verwood is both a good place to live and to minister. It presents an opportunity to shape and lead a well-resourced and broadly based parish into the future, especially with three church and two community schools. It is an exciting place to be! Wimborne Deanery is a large deanery, both urban and rural with a great set of supportive colleagues. Come and join us!

The Rev'd Canon Andrew Rowland  
Rural Dean of Wimborne  
Home Tel: 01202 882340



# Who We Are

Welcome to the Parish of Verwood, in the Diocese of Salisbury.

Verwood is a relatively young, vibrant community, in a beautiful part of the country, and we are a diverse and faithful church family, worshipping across two churches – St Michael and All Angels in Verwood and All Saints in the neighbouring village of Three Legged Cross. Our mission is simple and profound: *To know Jesus Christ and to make Him known.*

We seek a new Vicar to lead us in our collective ministry. A servant leader who will stir things up, not just keep the existing running.

We offer this profile as both a window and a welcome. We hope it reflects our love for God, our community, and one another, and our desire to grow in faith, service, and joy.



# Church and Community



Party Time



A Bit of Fund Raising



Noah's Ark Puppets



Glitz and Glamour Festival

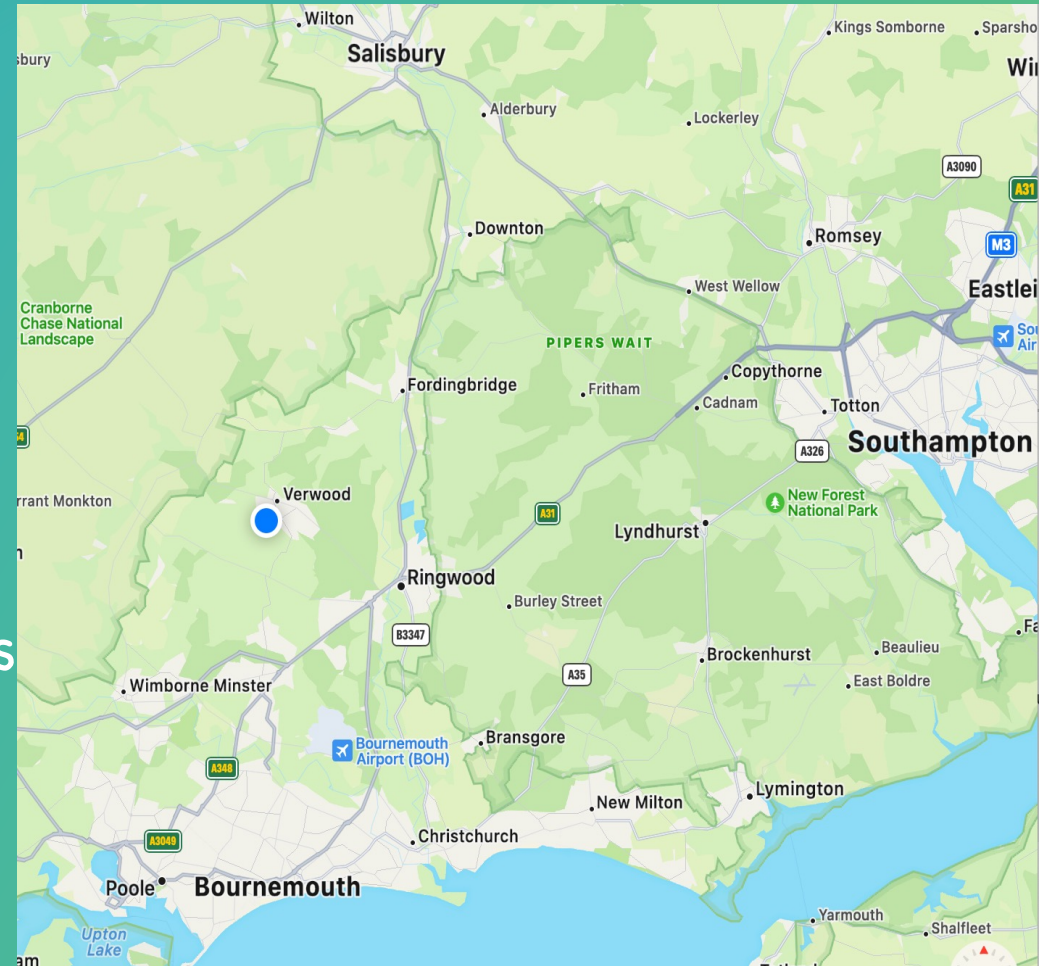
# Where We Are

Verwood is in east Dorset and is located between Cranborne Chase and the New Forest National Park.

Verwood and Three Legged Cross together form a growing, semi-rural parish of around 16,200 people. The area is popular with retirees, young families, and commuters.

It boasts:

- Excellent schools and medical facilities
- Thriving business parks.
- Low crime and high home ownership.
- Good access to the New Forest, Bournemouth, Salisbury, Poole, the Jurassic Coast, and Dorset's golden beaches.



# Verwood and Three Legged Cross

Together, Verwood and Three Legged Cross have a wide range of public and commercial services, including:

- Four first schools (two Church of England), one Church of England middle school, and upper schools in nearby Wimborne and Ferndown.
- Two GP practices, and a number of Dental Surgeries and specialist treatment practices.
- Two large supermarkets, as well as independent shops.
- “The Hub” with Cinema, Theatre, U3A, Gym, sports and fitness activities.
- Potterne Park with 3G football pitches, junior pitches, a rugby pitch, 2 tennis courts, a cricket square, skate park and children's play area, bordering on Moors Valley Country Park and Golf Club.



# Who We Are Looking For

We seek a friendly, outgoing, and dynamic Vicar whose faith is deeply rooted in Scripture. They should lead with empathy, delegate wisely, and inspire us with vision, while embracing, supporting, and extending our diverse worship styles to match the worshipping needs of all ages in our community.

## Challenges and Opportunities:

- Developing diverse worship (traditional, contemporary, all-age) with creativity to grow our church family.
- Reaching out to younger people and families and responding to changing community needs.
- Building on our relationships with schools, care homes, and local organisations.
- Working with and nurturing our pastoral care team and lay leadership.
- Verwood has grown considerably over the last two or three decades and continues to grow. Despite the best efforts of both Churches Together and individual denominations within it, Church attendance has not grown in the same way.

# What We Can Offer

- A loving and supportive church family whose members care for each other and our Vicar.
- Opportunities for our Vicar to grow in Christ and take time for retreat.
- Support in meeting the missional challenges.
- A committed and supportive ministry team.
- A positive and supportive PCC.
- A delightful location in which to live and minister.

“Verwood is a wonderful place to live and work. With the New Forest on the doorstep and the coast within thirty minutes drive it is an example of God’s wonderful creation.”



**Swans and Cygnets at Moors Valley Country Park**

# Strengths and Opportunities

## Strengths:

A rich and varied worship life across both churches.

- Collaborative ministry with lay leaders, retired clergy, and volunteers.
- Strong pastoral presence through weddings, baptisms, and funerals, often drawing in those beyond the regular congregation.
- A warm social life rooted in hospitality, shared meals, and community events.

## Opportunities for Growth:

- Deepening discipleship through small groups, seasonal courses, and creative prayer gatherings.
- Strengthening community engagement, especially with younger families and those on the margins.
- Enriching our prayer life, both personal and as a church family.
- Encouraging a culture of generous stewardship that flows from gratitude and shared purpose.

## Some Words From Our Family

"Having been baptised in St Michael's, my work life took me away for some time and so I worshipped in a number of different churches. When I came back to Verwood, as soon as I entered St Michael's again I realised that I was home."

"When my husband and I moved to Verwood in 2014 St Michael's was the first church we visited. We were made very welcome and continued to attend the 10 o'clock service. When my husband developed dementia the church family were, and still are, my saving grace and I am so grateful that we entered the 'Meeting Room' on that first Sunday morning."

"I would like to see our new Vicar consider something that supports, nurtures and grows faith in the young people and families in this parish. To offer them an alternative, modern, joyful worship experience. In a world of fake news and images, our young people crave a safe space to be themselves, especially in their teenage years. There are a large number of parents and middle-aged people that may not be from a faith background that do not know God and possibly don't see traditional church as a place to feel comfortable in."

## Some Words From Our Family

"All Saints is my spiritual home because of its unwavering, genuine support, which makes the congregation feel like family. Everyone happily mucks in, both to ensure the church runs smoothly, and to support outreach events, such as our popular community coffee and cake mornings."

"I love being part of a Bible believing fellowship."

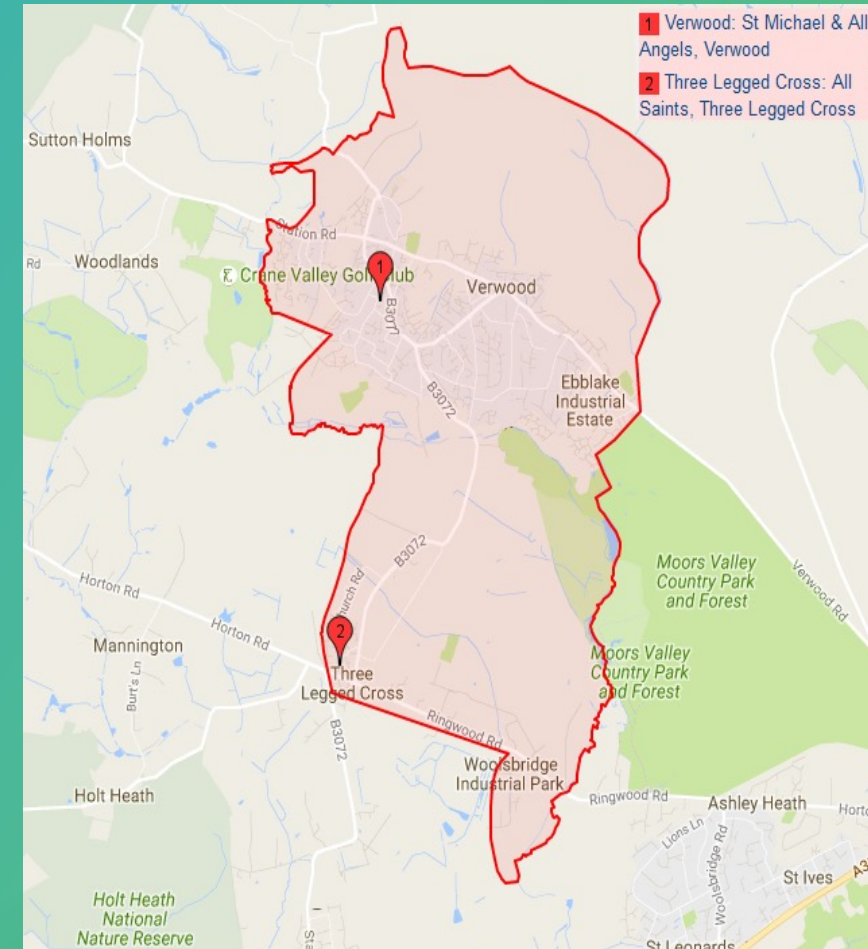
"For the last 3 years, in spite of appointing a Children's Worker to work with us and our schools, and a lot of input from the Clergy team, there has been slow progress getting some schools to engage with us. However, there is now a new Head at one of the first schools who is anxious to engage with us, and they have just held their school Harvest Festival Service in St. Michael's. This is the first whole school service in the church since Covid."

"Verwood used to be a small village, now a growing town, so the vast majority of the population chose to live here, rather than grew up here. That is also true for our church family; we chose to worship here."

# The Parish

The parish is set on the edge of Ringwood forest and is surrounded mainly by farmland. The map, right, shows the relative locations of both St Michael's and All Saints churches.

Along with four other Christian churches we take an active role in Churches Together in Verwood and hold ecumenical services and events throughout the year. A recent highlight was our shared presence at the annual Rustic Fayre organised by the Rotary Club, where the CTiV marquee welcomed visitors with interactive displays. We were delighted to host Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF) who brought along one of their aircraft and a flight simulator. This offered a hands-on experience that drew great interest from all ages.



# Our Churches

## St Michael and All Angels

A beautiful 19th-century church with restored stencilled walls and muralled ceilings, and a modern extension.

Services include:

- 10.00am Parish Eucharist (robed choir, livestreamed).
- 6.00pm Together@Six (informal, contemporary worship, usually lay led).
- 6.00pm Occasional Choral Evensong.
- Monthly 8.30am Holy Communion (BCP, Sunday).
- Monthly 9.15am Holy Communion (BCP, Tuesday).
- Weekly 9.00am Morning Prayer (Thursday).
- Quarterly Dementia Friendly Services.
- In the past year we have held 5 baptisms, 4 weddings, and 17 funerals in St. Michael's.



# Our Churches

## All Saints



The current church at Three Legged Cross is the 1994 successor to the original "tin church" erected in 1893. The Reverend Claude Brown, first Vicar of the Parish, wanted to save his parishioners the long walk to the church in Verwood.

Services include:

- Monthly 10.00am Eucharist.
- Monthly 10.00am Morning Praise (Morning Prayer with hymns, usually lay led).



Monthly events:

- Coffee and Cake Mornings – an outreach, well supported by both church family and local residents.
- Prayer and Fellowship Meetings.
- Strong lay leadership and community ties.

# Our Church Family

We are a broad church with 101 on the electoral roll, and another 50 adults regularly involved. Our worshipping life spans traditional liturgy, contemporary praise, and informal gatherings.

We are blessed with:

- Two retired priests with Permission to Officiate.
- Two Licensed Lay Ministers.
- A Lay Worship Leader.
- A Commissioned Lay Pioneer.
- Eight Lay Pastoral Assistants.
- A Verger who assists at weddings and funerals.
- A dedicated choir and music group.
- Active volunteers across all ministries.



# Church and Community

We offer a rich tapestry of ministries and activities:

- Bible study and Ecumenical Lent groups.
- Children's choir from Trinity First School.
- Taking Holy Communion to Care Homes.
- School Services.
- Passover Meal during Holy Week.
- Local Radio Broadcast Preaching Slot.
- Noah's Ark Puppets.
- Prayer and Fellowship.
- Themed Festivals.
- Quiz Nights.
- Occasional Concerts (with plans to expand).
- Monthly Sunday Lunches for the elderly.
- Monthly Sunday Afternoon Teas.
- Bereavement teas.
- Dementia outreach.
- FoodBank, and FareShare Larder support.



# Church Activity

## Parish Retreats

For many years, our annual retreats have been held at either Hilfield Friary in Dorset, or Glastonbury Abbey House in Somerset, but for our 2025 retreat our Curate at the time led a joint parish retreat, with Holy Angels Lilliput, to Walsingham in Norfolk.



**Anglican Shrine at Walsingham**



**Hilfield Friary**



**Glastonbury Abbey House**

# Church Activity

## New Wine Christian Festival

For more than 30 years some of our church family, plus family and friends, have attended the annual New Wine Christian Festival. Some work as volunteers whilst others attend for the worship and teaching. More than a dozen members of our church family attended this year's event.

This involvement has had a major influence on our contemporary acts of worship, both musically and in the teaching.



Evening Worship

## Existing plans

Over recent years, the PCC has had the vision, shared with many across the globe, of closing the gap to carbon neutrality for all our activities. With this in mind we have instigated a major project in St Michael's that includes the following:

- Replacing the existing oil-fired warm air heating system with an Air-Source Heat Pump powered underfloor heating system.
- Installing Solar PV panels on the roofs of the church and the Parish Centre.
- Rewiring the church (sadly a necessity).
- Upgrading the lighting throughout the church.
- Planning is underway, with completion expected by 2027, pending funding.
- We are actively looking for external grant funding, being reluctant to invest all our resources.
- Installing a new sound system, in January 2026, for which funding has been secured.



# Our Finances

This topic is invariably one of the regular subjects for deliberation by the PCC and prayer by the church.

- Our parish share in 2024 was £92,313 and as always, was paid in full, and on time.
- During 2024, we were very fortunate to receive bequests totalling £188,188.
- Our expenditure in 2024 was £164,205 whilst income was exceptionally £333,270.
- Our general reserve is around £199,000 and restricted around £88,000.
- The Treasurer's main concern is planned giving. This necessary commitment has led to some worrying times in the recent past. Generous bequests and donations have prevented a deficit, but the issue of the planned giving requires ongoing attention.
- Although the issue of Stewardship has been addressed by the Donations Secretary and clergy, with fundraising events held, the attitude to 'doing' and giving in all areas, including financial, has not yet reached what we pray for, though in 2025 income modestly exceeded expenditure.
- Independently Examined Annual Accounts are filed with the Charities Commission.

# Parish Centre and Office

The Parish Centre, rebuilt in 1996, is a major contributor to church funds through both regular, and occasional, hirings. The centre hosts over 50 community events annually, fostering strong local connections.

Facilities include:

- Large and small halls used for church and community events, e.g. Keep Fit classes, Birthday and Christening parties, Quiz Nights, Wine Tasting events, Harvest Supper etc.
- Refurbished kitchen and toilets.

The fully equipped, welcoming, Parish Office, which is part of the Centre, with its own entrance, is staffed by a part-time administrator, plus volunteers, who help the many visitors with information, Parish Centre booking enquiries etc. plus supporting clergy and lay leaders.



# The Vicarage

The vicarage is a spacious red brick house originally built in the early part of the 20th Century and extended in 1957. It is an attractive family home, on a relatively quiet road, a short walking distance (c.200m) to St Michael's, and a 5 minute drive to All Saints.

- Entrance lobby with direct access to the study and separate access to the main body of the house.
- Large living room and separate dining room.
- Spacious fitted kitchen/breakfast room.
- Utility room with doors to the garden and the integral garage. Additional, attached, garage.
- Downstairs cloakroom.
- Three double bedrooms plus a single with a shower.
- Recently refurbished family bathroom.
- Well-tended gardens and hard parking area.



## Final Blessing

We pray that God may guide you, and that you will be open to hear His calling if our church is to be your new family. We look forward to meeting you: to hearing your story, sharing ours, and discerning together what God might be calling us to build in faith, hope, and love.

