

The Parish of Bridport



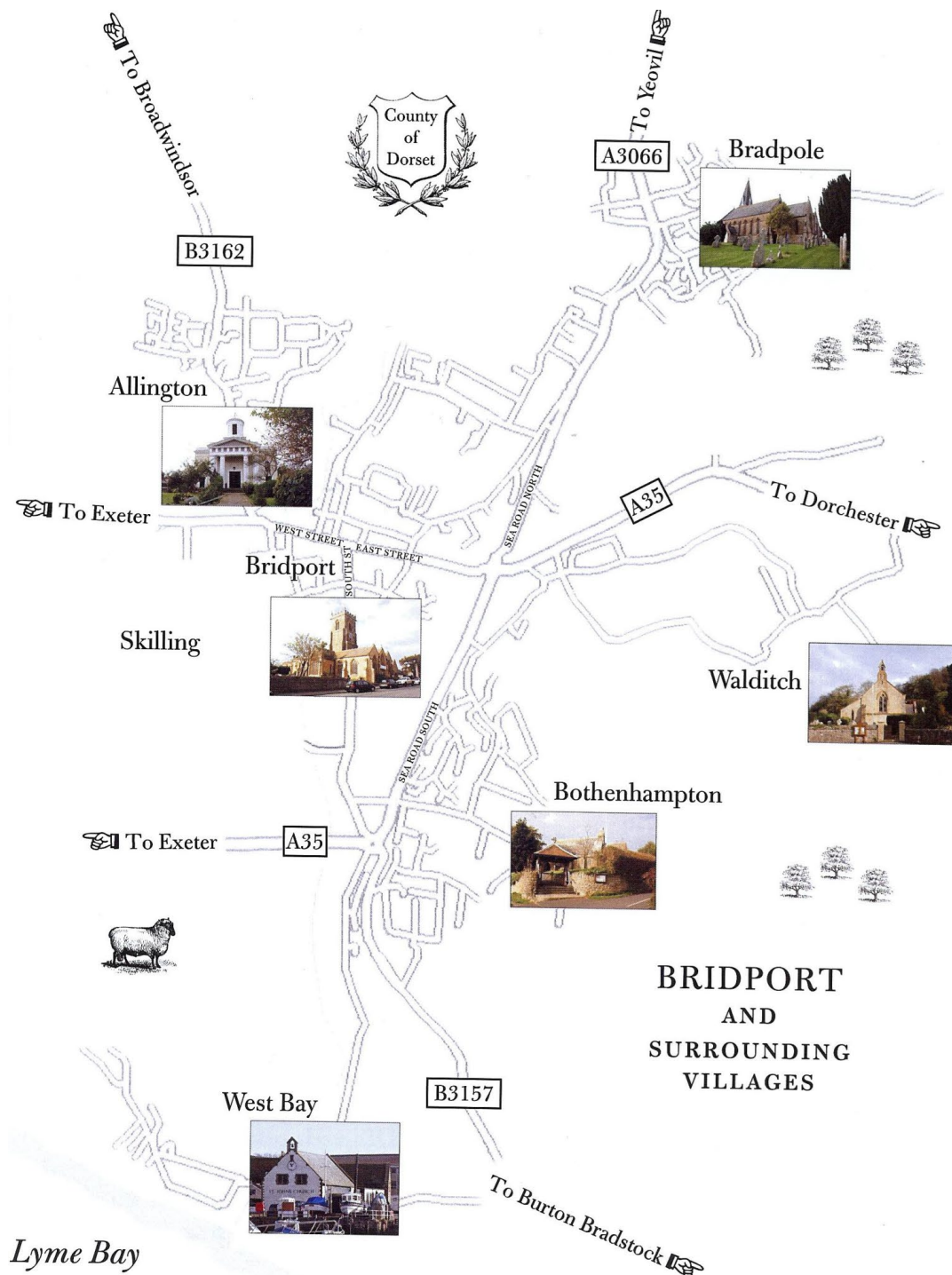
Parish Profile for the post of Pioneer Team Vicar

October 2023

Welcome!

We welcome your interest in the Parish of Bridport – one parish, one congregation, across six churches – in our vibrant market town in West Dorset.

We hope this profile gives you a feel for who we are, what we do and seek to do, our desire to deepen our faith, and our enthusiasm to look outwards in serving God and his people in this place.



An introduction to the vacancy by the Bishop of Sherborne

This post offers an excellent opportunity for the right candidate to bring their skills and gifts to a welcoming team, where each church has its own unique ministry and there are great opportunities in a significant seaside town and beyond.

Bridport and West Bay enjoys both a seaside and a town outlook, with holidaymakers, weekenders, walkers, artists and craftspeople, and long-established residents all feeling at home here. Ministry is varied: there are excellent opportunities for outreach; for nurturing the existing congregation and newcomers; for establishing relationships with those seeking spiritual refreshment away from the busyness of day-to-day life; for building on the variety of church traditions present in the team churches; for utilising the gifts of others; and for complementing that which is already offered.

We are seeking a pioneer who can offer some support to the clergy team in developing the work of the churches in Bridport, but who can mainly, working in partnership, develop an active ministry among the artists, craftspeople and musicians along the coastal area between Lyme Regis and Weymouth. We see this as an opportunity for the church to reach out to some of our missing generations. The diocesan vision of 'Making Jesus Known' has just been launched, with an emphasis on creative partnerships in local mission. One of the pilot projects is along our coastal towns and villages, so we want to have a team vicar among us with a particular pioneering brief.

The Bridport parish offers much for those who enjoy the outdoors. There is plenty to do for all

the family. The Jurassic Coast remains popular even in winter with a significant population of all ages, as well as many visitors who enjoy walking, a weekend away, interesting shops, a variety of places to stay, seeing the real 'Broadchurch' and good local pubs and restaurants. Further afield lie Dorchester and Weymouth to the east and Lyme Regis and Axminster to the west. Road links between Bridport and the West Country are relatively good (this is 'slow Dorset!').

The parish stands in the Lyme Bay deanery, which is significantly rural with a coastal fringe. It provides a supportive environment for local clergy and lay leaders and encourages collaborative working as much as possible for the good of the wider area. There are a number of active retired priests in the deanery who get involved in the life of their local church and continue to offer their gifts of ministry.

We are looking for an energetic, creative pioneer to build on all that is already happening, and who can see the potential to work with others to make a difference.

Should you wish to know more about this post please do not hesitate to pay a discreet visit to take a look around or contact the Team Rector or me to discuss further. We look forward to hearing from you.

Bishop Karen (01747 811960)





Job description

Pioneer Team Vicar with an interest in the Arts to join the Bridport Team Ministry

We are seeking a Pioneer Team Vicar to join us in the vibrant Dorset town of Bridport and its surrounding villages. This is an exciting opportunity to join an established team and to work in partnership with others. We are looking for a priest who has a pioneering spirit, who would relish the opportunity to engage with the artistic community, reach out to the missing generations and make Jesus known to residents and visitors alike.

We are seeking a priest who:

- is creative and outward-facing;
- will enjoy engaging with artists, craftspeople, musicians and the array of community projects active along the coast;
- will make Jesus known to the missing generations;
- will work collaboratively with colleagues within the parish and more widely in the deanery;
- will enjoy working with our schools and continue the development of our community hub;
- is comfortable with a variety of worship styles from catholic to contemplative.

We offer:

- friendly and supportive congregations encompassing a variety of traditions;
- the chance to develop your ministry through encouraging community activities;
- supportive colleagues, ordained and lay within the parish, and more widely in the deanery;
- life in a lively location, encompassing part of Dorset's Jurassic Coast.

For full details of this vacancy, please visit
www.salisbury.anglican.org/whos-who/job-vacancies/clergy

Closing date: 2 November
Visit and interview: 27 & 28 November

An enhanced DBS is required.

From the Team Rector

I have been Team Rector for five years. In that time, we have worked to build up the parish. We now come together across our six churches for pastoral and mission work, fabric, governance, finance and to explore our vision for where God is leading us in Bridport.

We offer a range of traditions and settings and cherish the distinctiveness of each of our worshipping communities, but we also value what binds us together. We have found new opportunities to work collaboratively, which has been rewarding, but at times we have found it hard to do things in new ways. In moving forwards together, however, we have learnt more about each other and about the one who calls us. This has been a time in the life of the parish that has encouraged and enabled many people to recognise and share their gifts, and I believe this has made us stronger and kinder.

A journey rooted in prayer

This journey of coming together is rooted in prayer, and in the commitment we have made together to meet to worship as a parish congregation on the first Sunday of each month. We are exploring new ways of gathering and offer a variety of services on Sundays and through the week, from the Eucharist, morning praise and prayer for wholeness and healing to Wild and Messy Church and contemplative prayer.

The work of worship is also expressed in the parish as hospitality across the churches, in Eco Church, support of our food bank and in the many ways people in the parish are active in the life of the town. We celebrate the liturgical seasons and

work with our partners in Churches Together across the deanery.

As we look to the future, we want to find new and creative ways to build on this cooperative impetus: to look outwards and connect in new ways with our town. There is also scope to develop a wider ministry beyond Bridport across the deanery.



The eventful town

Bridport has been dubbed 'the eventful town', and it's bustling and quirky. Numerous festivals and a wealth of community-run projects enrich life for many, although there are also areas of social deprivation where the cost-of-living crisis has hit hard.

Hopes for the future

We hope a new Team Vicar will have a pioneering approach to ministry, helping us make new connections, especially through the arts and the many community projects in the town. The new post offers an opportunity to look out to the wider community, to engage more deeply with our town, to join in with some of the amazing things already happening in Bridport, and to offer ourselves in service. We hope our buildings might be a greater resource for all, but equally we want to celebrate the ways we are already active out in the wider town and deepen and develop those bonds. Or to put it another way, quoting Bishop Andrew of Ramsbury, I hope together we can →

Bridport is a bustling town with plenty going on, both in and outside our churches



“commit to making our churches and our lives rehearsal rooms for the coming Kingdom.”

A firm foundation

We want to build on the past, to recognise the importance that our cherished places of worship have in the lives of the people of this town, even those who seldom come into church. We want to demonstrate how our churches and our presence in this community are signs of love, hope and generous welcome. We are looking for a new Team Vicar who will journey with us and have a bias for life outside of the churches as well as within them. We look forward to welcoming you into this special place and hope your fresh eyes will encourage us to expand our vision for looking outwards, allow us to make new relationships and connections and to grow in hope and service.

Sharing in leadership

I would value a colleague to share in leadership and to deepen the vision of collaboration and service in the parish. I look forward to gaining a fresh perspective and new energy for ministry in Bridport while working with you. I hope we can develop the next steps of this exciting journey together, working with the ministry team, the PCC and our churchwardens as well as stakeholders in the town and those who often feel on the margins.

All we do must be rooted in the life of prayer, for it is the heartbeat of the parish and our lives together. This in turn will enable us to be truly rooted in this place in which God has set us, and to be open to where God is leading us.

The Revd Canon Deb Smith
Team Rector

An introduction to the parish

What you might know

Bridport is an attractive and lively market town in rural Dorset. It lies within a designated area of outstanding beauty and on the stunning Jurassic Coast, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Our town has a reputation for independent thinking and as a centre for arts and culture. There is an artists' quarter, several successful performance venues and galleries and a wealth of live music and theatre. Bridport is known for its literary, film and music festivals, not to mention the Hat Festival and an array of community events through the year.

Some say Bridport is quite alternative, although the majority of the population are older, retired people. Sounds rather cosy doesn't it?

The reality of the Parish of Bridport

- Probably fewer than 50% of the population enjoy the arts events the town is known for.
- The relatively high proportion of older people is above both the national average (17%) and the average for Dorset as a whole (29%).
- The relatively low proportion of younger people suggests many move away for higher education or career opportunities.



Several factors are driving a housing crisis in the Bridport area:

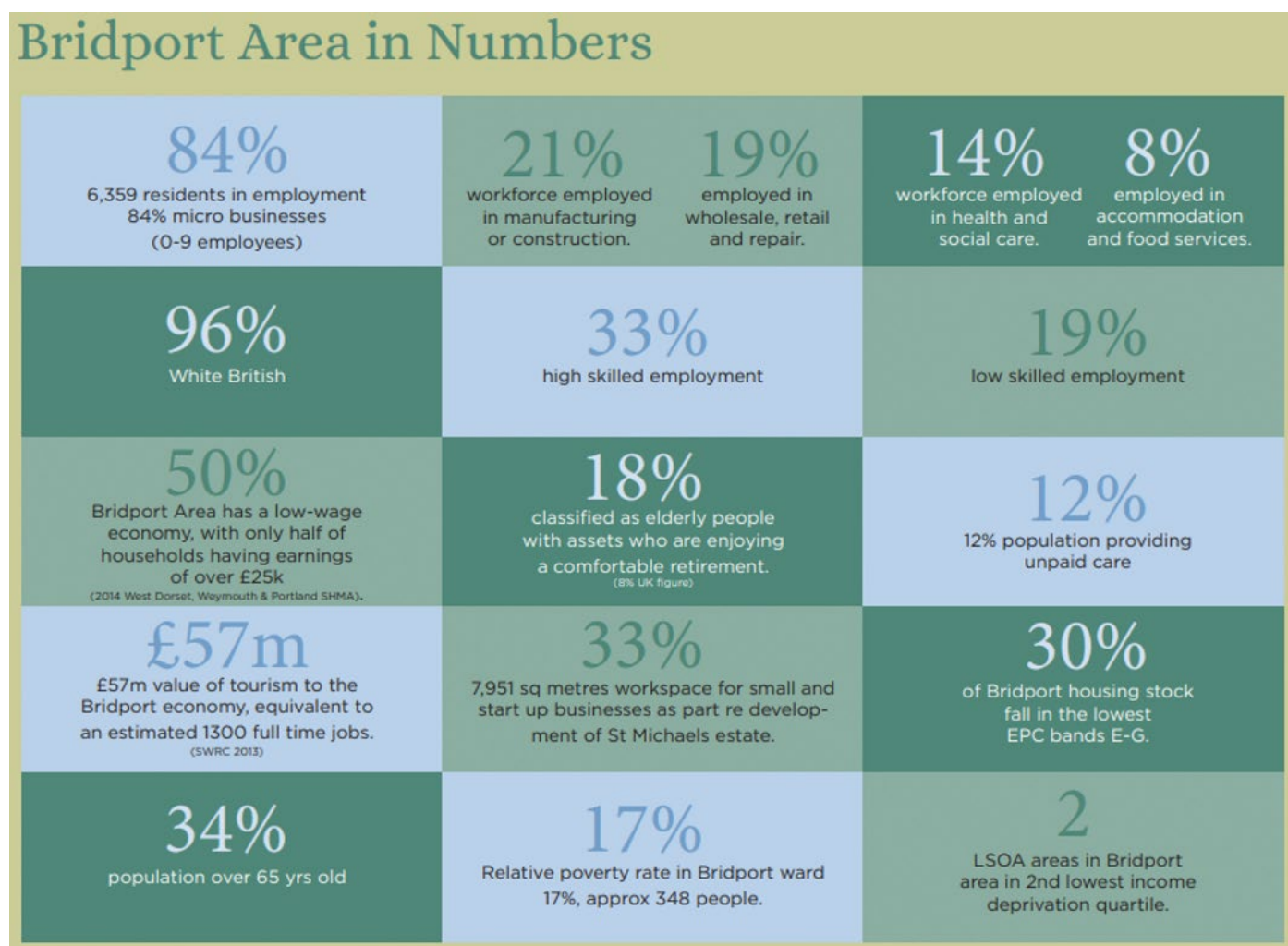
- A demographic skewed to retirement age (>65s make up 32–44% of the population, and this is expected to grow);
- Inequality between the financial means of residents and incomers;
- Weekly earnings in Bridport are low, at around 92% of the national average, and house prices are higher than the national average;



- 50% of our working-age population is caught in a low-wage economy;
- About 13% of children in the area live in low-income households;
- 25% of households with dependent children are lone-parent families;
- There are around 2,500 families on benefits;
- In 2020, lower-end housing prices were 11 times

higher than lower-end earnings typical of those found in Bridport;

- Bridport area will need more 1- and 2-bedroom housing units than current provision;
- Planning permissions for new housing tend to supply 3- and 4-bed properties, which are forecast to be over-supplied by 2030.



Age profile of the Bridport population

Civil parish	Population	% over 65
Allington	930	23
Bridport	8,200	32
Bradpole	2,300	36
Bothenhampton & Walditch	2,100	44
Total	13,530	34

Community and social action

Life in Bridport is enriched by our many festivals and the vibrant arts scene – but also through the array of community projects and groups that promote wellbeing as well as social and community action in the town. These range from community allotments and food growing schemes; a community orchard; and Bridport Community Shed, which brings people together to share skills and experiences and make and mend; to The Living Tree, a cancer support group; Bridport Memory Café; Hopeful Hampers, Pathways to Care, which helps those with transport needs; and many others too.

Our parish churches are involved with some of this work and offer our support to these initiatives more broadly, too. Cupboard Love, the Bridport food bank, was started at St Mary's Bridport and has recently become an independent charity. The food bank still meets in the church and church members are among the trustees and

volunteers. St Swithun's is the base for another community food project, the Glut Stall (part of the Community Fridge) and the Bridport Clothes Bank also runs through some of our church buildings. Our parish has been involved in working with the town council and other churches across the town to open our buildings as warm spaces. There is a long-running lunch club sponsored by Holy Trinity Bradpole and held in a local pub, and over the last year church members from Holy Trinity Bothenhampton have started up a very successful monthly lunch club in the village hall.

Eco Church participants in the parish have been involved in The Great Big Green Week, which runs in the town as part of the nationwide celebration of action on climate change.

The Parish of Bridport is an active supporter of Christian Aid and organises events to raise awareness and funds every year.



The Glut Stall at St Swithun's



The Glut Stall at St Swithun's



Volunteers at Bridport Food Bank, held in St Mary's



The clothes bank at St Swithun's

Our churches

St Mary's Bridport

A large, imposing church seating 400 people, St Mary's is in the heart of Bridport and is a gathering place for civic services and events as well as for regular worship. The earliest parts of this beautiful building can be traced back to the 13th century and much of the rest dates from the 15th century.

At St Mary's we believe God has called us from many walks of life to grow together as a family and engage fully with the local and wider community. We have a lively Sunday School, a Tots Time group, an active team of bellringers, a group of churchyard gardeners and a regular informal meeting of the Mothers' Union. St Mary's is a registered Eco Church, and the Bridport Food Bank operates here each Wednesday.



We have two services nearly every Sunday morning – an early Holy Communion service using the Book of Common Prayer, followed by either Holy Communion or Morning Worship at 11am. There is also Holy Communion on the first Wednesday afternoon each month.

St Swithun's Allington

St Swithun's was built in 1827 – apparently modelled on the proportions of Solomon's Temple – to replace a medieval church a quarter of a mile away. Unusually, the entrance faces east, but the Georgian building is striking, with a portico supported on four Tuscan columns and a circular cupola above.

Inside, the stained-glass windows depict different designs of the cross from cultures and faiths around the world. A large decorated crucifix hangs behind the central altar.

St Swithun's hall is used by many local groups as well as by the church community for events including coffee mornings, plant sales and fetes. Bridport Community Fridge and Garden Glut set up stalls every Thursday morning in the car park, offering free food and sometimes other items.

Worship at St Swithun's is in the Anglo-Catholic style, with Eucharist services every Sunday and Thursday morning. There is also a Contemplative Church gathering in the hall once or twice a month and a fortnightly Centering Prayer group.



Holy Trinity Bothenhampton

Holy Trinity Bothenhampton was consecrated in 1890. Its architect, Edward Prior, was a member of the Arts and Crafts movement, which was established to reverse the trend towards the use of machinery and to promote the use of the human hand in art. This is much in evidence in Holy Trinity's building and decoration.

The church's burial area is in the peaceful surroundings of the nearby 14th-century 'Old Church', Holy Trinity's predecessor, which is now in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust.

Holy Trinity is a welcoming and caring church that focuses on reaching out to people in the village and beyond, bringing them together at popular coffee mornings, lunches, teas, barbecues and a summer fete. The loyal congregation favours traditional worship, and the small, enthusiastic choir enjoys singing at services.

There are usually three Sunday services each month (Morning Praise, Matins or Holy Communion).



Our churches (continued)

Holy Trinity Bradpole

Holy Trinity was built in 1845–6 to replace a small medieval church. A remnant of the earlier building remains in the form of a late 14th-century tracery head, preserved in the west wall of the nave.

The oldest tomb in the churchyard is dated 1654. Newer features include a decorated wrought iron and bronze chancel screen within a painted arch mural, painted in 1897.

There are no pews in Holy Trinity, which – together with the underfloor heating – makes the building ideal for a range of uses. There is good access from the small car park for disabled people, plus an accessible toilet and a small kitchen. There is a pipe organ, a piano and an active music group. The tower contains a peal of eight bells, often used for silent training as well as ringing.

There are usually three Sunday services each month (Morning Praise or Holy Communion) plus Holy Communion at 2.30pm on the first Tuesday. The liturgy and visual images are often shown on LCD display screens.



St Mary's Walditch

St Mary's Church lies in a tranquil rural setting in Old Walditch, five minutes' drive from Bridport, and also serves the housing estate in Lower Walditch, with community activities in the village hall.

The current church was built in 1863 although records of a place of worship on the site date back to Tudor times. It's a small building, seating

about 70, and its memorials include one to the American GIs stationed in the village just before the D-Day Normandy landings in 1944. The church has a 12th-century font made of Purbeck stone, and beautiful corbels in the chancel carved to resemble foxgloves, ferns and blackberries.

The churchyard is part of the Living Churchyard project and is well maintained. Seating is provided for quiet reflection.

There is usually a Morning Praise service on three Thursdays each month and a sung Holy Communion service on the fourth Sunday.



St John's West Bay

St John's is in West Bay, Bridport's busy, vibrant harbour on the Jurassic Coast. The resort is a great favourite with holidaymakers, many of whom return every year.

Opened in 1939, the church is the youngest in the parish of Bridport. The rendered stone building is relatively plain inside and out but has a lovely stained-glass window depicting a boat and lighthouse and these words from Psalm 107: "They that go down to the sea in ships and occupy their business in great waters; these men see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep." St John's supports the Fisherman's Mission and there is an area in the church dedicated to the fishing community.

There are usually three Sunday morning services each month (Morning Worship or Holy Communion) plus Morning Prayer every Monday



wwof Wholeness and Healing one Saturday each month. During the summer there are Sunday afternoon services outside the church, run by Churches Together in Bridport and District.

Church services – current pattern of worship

	1 st Sunday	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	2 nd Sunday	Mon	Thur	3 rd Sunday	Mon	Thur	4 th Sunday	Mon	Thur	Sat	5 th Sunday
	1000 Parish Communion															
Holy Trinity Bothenhampton						1100 MP			1100 HC			1100 Matins				1100 HC
Holy Trinity Bradpole			1430 HC			0930 MP			0930 HC			0930 MP				0930 HC
St John's West Bay		1000 MP				1100 HC	1000 MP		1100 MP	1000 MP		1100 MP	1000 MP		1800 W&H	1100 HC
St Mary's Bridport	0800 BCP					0800 BCP			0800 BCP			0800 BCP				0800 BCP
						1100 HC			1100 MP			1100 HC				1100 MP
St Mary's Walditch					1000 MP			1000 MP			1000 MP	1100 HC				
St Swithun's Allington	1600 CC	1630 EP			1000 HC	0930 HC		1000 HC	0930 HC		1000 HC	0930 HC		1000 HC		0930 HC

On the first Sunday of the month, we hold a parish service where all six churches are invited to worship at 10am. CC = Contemplative Church (Prayer), MP = Morning Prayer/Praise, EP = Evening Prayer, HC = Eucharist/Holy Communion, W&H = Wholeness and Healing

Visitors

We estimate that about 7,000 visitors a year visit the churches in the parish, with many taking time out from their seaside holiday to enjoy the peace of our Chapel of Ease, St John's at West Bay. As a parish, we hold firmly to the tenet that our churches should be open, and we have been actively working on the means by which we make visitors feel welcome. We have various displays and leaflets to give information about the history and features of each church, and the Eco Church group has begun to provide nature trails around our churchyards. St Mary's, in the centre of Bridport, holds Saturday coffee mornings with the primary purpose of welcoming the town's tourists and those who are visiting the market.

Each of our churches has distinct features of interest that draw particular groups of visitors, and St Swithun's in Allington was recognised by Pevsner as a "Georgian Gem". Plans are afoot



Pevsner called St Swithun's a 'Georgian gem'

there to renew and restore the building and so make it a more welcoming worship space and tourist destination. Pevsner also praised Holy Trinity Bothenhampton, highlighting the Arts and Crafts Exhibition in 1889, and the church attracts visitors from various Arts and Crafts societies.

Finance

We believe God provides for his ministry, and it has been wonderful to witness how he has done this over the past few years despite the Covid pandemic and a cost-of-living crisis. We have a total worshipping community of 217 and our Fairer Share payment for this current financial year is £115,630. Fortunately we are also now up to date with all the payments for recent years.

It is a challenge to cover these obligations, together with the maintenance of six historic church buildings and the expenses of active ministry within the parish. We are so grateful to the parishioners and others who give regularly and generously through a variety of methods including the Parish Giving Scheme. The churches are also very creative in the use of their buildings and other assets for various events to raise more

funds, and we have been blessed to receive many kind gifts in the form of donations and legacies.

The administration of these finances is managed by a treasurer or book-keeper in each church, who then join together with the Parish Treasurer and each other in the Finance Sub-Committee. They jointly set up and review an annual budget, and discuss other financial topics that arise, so that regular reports or recommendations can be made to the whole PCC.

Janet Shaw
Parish Treasurer



Baptisms, weddings and funerals

The occasional offices are an important part of our ministry and the place where we meet people at the crossroads of life and help them to mark these significant times of joy and sorrow.

Most baptisms happen outside of the main



Sunday services and across all the churches, although it is always a delight to celebrate baptism with the gathered church community. We welcome all who wish to be baptised, or bring a child to baptism, offering preparation and signposting ways in which the church

can keep in touch – through our toddler groups, for instance. The number of baptism services fluctuates but last year we conducted 15.

Last year we conducted five weddings, though these numbers also vary every year. We also welcome those wishing to renew their vows. Priests spend a great deal of time building up relationships with those getting ready for their

big day – and, of course, others in the congregations, including bellringers, organists and our parish administrator, also take a role in ensuring all goes to plan. Though we have fairly low numbers of weddings in the parish, priests here support their colleagues across the deanery in conducting weddings in neighbouring parishes, too.

It is our privilege to come alongside those who grieve as they prepare for the funeral of a loved one. In this parish we conduct between 80 and 100 funerals a year, as well as interment of ashes and memorial services. All involved in this ministry give a great deal of time, care and prayer to the families we serve. Services are held in all our churches as well as local crematoriums. At All Souls all who have been bereaved are invited to a service to remember those who have died in the last year. We also run a monthly bereavement group.



Home groups

There has been a long tradition of small groups running across our churches to offer prayer, Bible study and a forum for theological thinking. More recently we have also made a particular emphasis on study across the parish in the seasons of Advent and Lent, using the same text in different settings and contexts, perhaps delivered in alternative formats (walking and talking, gathering to eat together and discuss,

using crafts or poetry). Building on these groups we have drawn out common themes into Sunday worship and hope to build further on this approach.

I want to develop our experiences of quiet days and retreats, to walk alongside people as they attend one of these for the first time but to develop connections between the published theme, daily prayer and daily life.

Community hubs and young people

The Parish of Bridport is part of the network of Community Hubs running across the diocese.

Salisbury Diocese Community Hub Foundation/ Growing Faith Foundation works at the intersection of church, school, family and community. It begins with listening to young people's voices as an impetus to start projects and networks that offer space for children and families to explore questions of spirituality and faith. The inspiration is a desire to bring school and church leadership together in communities like Bridport to drive change in collaboration with wider groups and organisations, each contributing from their gifts, skills and resources.

In Bridport that work began in consultation with children and young people and resulted in projects like Walk and Talk, which takes small groups of youngsters out of school for meditative walks in nature, allowing them to talk and explore ideas about the world and God. Both this project and Star Club, our after-school club, developed into innovative pilot projects that are now being replicated in other parts of the diocese.

In the parish we offer church-run tots' groups, Sunday School, a brunch service for families with food, and Wild and Messy Church, which brings youngsters together indoors and out to explore faith, eat together and have fun.



Schools

The Sir John Colfox Academy is the only secondary school in Bridport, and with 854 students currently on roll it seeks to serve the whole community.

Colfox, St Mary's CE Primary School and Bridport Primary School are members of the Initio Learning Trust. A third primary school, St Catherine's RC Primary School, is found to the north of the town. All the schools in the town are open to church involvement through direct contact with the children, leading of assemblies and supporting roles such as being a school governor. Our previous Team Vicar was, for a short while, Chair of Governors at St Mary's CE Primary School.

Our ministry in the primary schools is much appreciated. St Mary's CE Primary School has strong links with St Mary's Bridport and regularly celebrates the festivals with services in the church. These events see the church full to capacity with parents, teachers and children all keen to join in the joyous occasion. The headteacher at St Mary's School welcomes and actively encourages these links with the local church.

During the last academic year, clergy and parishioners led a weekly after-school club at St Mary's School. This gathering, called Star Club, gave parents and children time to socialise together with activities and refreshments provided by the local churches. We were sad that we were unable to sustain the group as we were too stretched. Some of the volunteers have



transferred to Wild and Messy Church, which runs in St Swithun's, as have many of the children from St Mary's School and their parents.

The schools regularly come to our churches as part of their learning, and through funding from Churches Together in Bridport we have been able to support a youth worker based in our local secondary school.

Eco Church

The Parish PCC agreed in 2021 to engage with the Eco Church scheme, recognising that each of the six churches would need to register separately.

A small, skilled, enthusiastic PCC sub-committee meets regularly to assess progress and make plans to further continue all our churches' Eco Church journey. Plans are in progress for an Eco Church workshop early next year. Members also attend local talks and workshops about environmental issues and share information and ideas.

To date three churches have registered, and recently St Mary's Bridport gained the Bronze

Award (pictured). For several years three of the churchyards have been participating in the Dorset Living Churchyards initiative. We are involving young people with a monthly Green Messy Church and some churches have twinned their bins and/or their toilets with recycling NGOs in Africa. Members of the congregation are encouraged to do likewise on a personal level.



We have welcomed the current and former Mayors of Bridport to attend services when we have been speaking about Eco Church and including them as we celebrate some of our achievements such as bin twinning (pictured right). We recognise the importance of networking with the Town Council which from April 2024 will have administrative responsibility of an area similar to the Ecclesiastical Parish of Bridport and Sustainable Bridport, which is a major Community Group looking at green issues.

We hope and pray that working collaboratively in this way will lead to a greener Bridport where people think about how they live and about how this affects the lives of others both locally and worldwide.



The Bridport Mayor came to St Mary's Bridport to celebrate the church's 'bin twinning'

Bellringing

St Mary's Bridport and Holy Trinity Bradpole have eight bells each. The bells at St Mary's were recast in 1924 after the Great War, in a major investment for the community of Bridport, with names of the supporters cast onto the bells*. The bells at Holy Trinity, restored in 1910, were recast in 1981 by the Whitechapel Bell Foundry of London.

Although there are two distinct bands of ringers, the tower captains work closely in support of one another. Both towers are affiliated to the Salisbury Diocesan Guild of Ringers (SDGR) and



many ringers are also members of the Dorset County Association of Church Bell Ringers. In the parish we have qualified teachers

Holy Trinity Bradpole (left) and St Mary's Bridport each has eight bells and its own band of ringers



of bell handling and foundation skills who are registered with the Association Of Ringing Teachers (ART). New learners often choose to follow the ART 'Learning the Ropes' scheme. More experienced ringers and teachers support other ringers' development, both in their own towers and across the county. Our ringers are currently supporting the learning of the new band of ringers at Shipton Gorge in a neighbouring parish.

Holy Trinity has a ground floor ringing chamber, with a simulator, so learners can ring outside the normal practice times. The SDGR uses Holy Trinity's facilities to offer training to ringers across West Dorset. St Mary's offers tower open days, which are popular with residents and visitors alike and the church has the additional attraction of a set of Ellacombe chimes. These proved invaluable during the Covid lockdowns.

Both bands ring for all key services at both churches and support one another in doing so. Holy Trinity ringers currently hold their main practices on Tuesdays and the St Mary's ringers on Thursdays. Additional training sessions and social events are held regularly.

Holy Trinity Bothenhampton has a handbells team. The handbells (given in the 1920s) are rung regularly to welcome the congregation at Christmas and Eastertide and at celebratory services, as well as at the church fete and community events.

**Bridport Ringers will hold special ceremonies next year to mark 100 years of the lovely St Mary's bells.*

The Bridge

The Bridge is more than a parish magazine – I prefer to call it a community magazine with its roots firmly in the churches of the Parish of Bridport. The aim of our production team is to create a publication with content that will appeal to people of all faiths and of none.

About half of each issue (adverts aside) is made up of material from our six parish churches – news, information about forthcoming events, reflection, comment, etc – plus the magazine’s ‘partner churches’, who are all fellow members of Churches Together. The rest is general news, features and interviews, whose subjects may or may not have a connection with the church.

This year we have published features about the Living Tree cancer support charity; Home-Start, an organisation that supports families through a network of trained volunteer visitors; the history of St Mary’s Church House Hall, and a call for trustees; the history of Bridport Bowling Club, to mark its 100th birthday; United Diversity Bridport, a community action group; local rambles, wildlife walks and environmental projects; and the Bridport Literary Festival (BridLit). We have also run interviews with the outgoing and incoming mayors of Bridport; botanist Sir Ghilean Prance; potter Jill Pryke; musician and singing teacher Jane Silver-Corren; farmer Michael Fooks, the

president of this year’s Melplash Agricultural Show, the largest in the area; the Revd Pete Stone, former Team Vicar, on the eve of his departure from the parish; and journalist and author Patrick Barkham, who is appearing at this year’s BridLit.

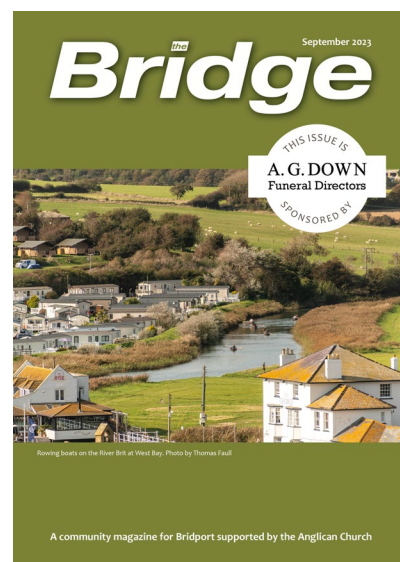
The Bridge’s USP is its network of delivery volunteers (more than 60 across all our churches) who between them deliver the magazine to about 5,800 residential addresses. This impressive ‘reach’ allows us to sell advertising at commercial rates, which in turn pays for our high production values and full colour printing.

We publish 10 issues each year, and our print run is just over 6,100 – the copies that aren’t delivered are available to pick up in our churches, several Bridport shops, and the Tourist Information Centre.

Olivia Daly

Editor, The Bridge

www.bridport-team-ministry.org/bridge



The Team Vicar’s house

5 Garden Close, Bridport DT6 3AJ
4 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms / shower room
(1 ensuite), large balcony
3 reception rooms, UPVC conservatory, kitchen / breakfast room, utility
Large secluded south-facing walled gardens.
Double garage, driveway with turning and parking area

In an elevated position at the end of a cul-de-sac, the house enjoys far-reaching views across Bridport to the south. Tucked away from the centre, yet only 10 minutes’ walk from the Town Hall at the top of South Street. Built in 1987, the detached house has a gas-fired Aga in the kitchen.



See overleaf for the floor plan →



The Deanery

Lyme Bay Deanery takes in the Jurassic Coast from Abbotsbury to Lyme Regis and stretches inland to Bridport and Beaminster and beyond. We are the most western deanery of the Diocese of Salisbury and border Exeter Diocese in the west and Bath and Wells diocese in the northeast. Our deanery is made up of five benefices, each with a Rector and other paid and self-supporting clergy including Team Vicars, House for Duty posts, associate clergy, curates and those with permission to officiate. We also have extensive lay ministry within the deanery including licensed lay ministers, lay worship leaders and lay pastoral assistants.

Deanery Synod meets three times each year, moving venue across the deanery, with evening meetings in the autumn and summer and a daytime Saturday meeting in the winter. We have a lay chair and deanery treasurer and are looking to recruit a deanery secretary.

The clergy chapter meets most months, often in the daytime for lunch and prayer, and sometimes in the evening for more social activities. We are supportive of one another and have ambitions to work more collaboratively. The most recent deanery event was a church tent at the Melplash Agricultural Show in August 2023.

The Revd Jo Neary

Pioneer Priest, Beaminster Area Team

Churches Together

Churches Together in Bridport and District comprises all the churches in the town which are in accord with the principles of CT in Britain and Ireland, and those which are members of the Evangelical Alliance. We meet three times a year, plus an AGM.

Each year we present an Epiphany carol service, a dawn service on Easter morning, open-air services at West Bay in July and August, the lighting of the Christmas tree, the Bridport Nativity, and community carols after the sea swim on Boxing Day. We also provide a rest tent at the annual Melplash Show, which proves extremely popular.

We are also the parent organisation for a number of other groups including Pathways to Care, Good Books and the Youth Worker Project.

More recently we have been involved in the development of twice-yearly Taizé services.



By way of conclusion...

We hope you have enjoyed reading this Parish of Bridport profile. This document gives an outline of the life, ministry, mission and workings of the parish and this town, but there is so much more to be discovered. If what you've read has caught your imagination and made you want to know more, please do get in touch and come and see us or complete an application form.

There is more information on our website:
www.bridport-team-ministry.org

Bridport Town Council



Bridport has a bustling twice-weekly market



St Mary's Bridport



The Bridport Nativity is always extra special!



The coast and cliffs at West Bay