

Bath Abbey



Appointment of a Rector of Bath Abbey

Living and telling the Good News of Jesus

www.bathabbey.org



Contents

“ Living and Telling the Good News of Jesus ”

A Message from Bishop Michael	3-4
A Message from the Patron	5
The Parish Profile	6-17
The Diocesan Statement	18-20
Bath Deanery Statement	21
Bath Abbey Group Ministry	22
Facts, Figures and References	23
Staff Organisation Structure Chart	24
Thoughts from our Youngest Members	25



*Image of Abbey
Betty Bhandari Photography*





Discerning the Appointment of a new Rector of Bath Abbey – A Message from Bishop Michael (Bishop of Bath and Wells)

We are delighted to share this profile as we discern together the person that God is calling to be the next Rector of Bath Abbey. If you are wondering whether that person could be you, thank you for reading these pages and for all the prayer that you will be pouring into whether and how to make an application for this role.

After our Cathedral, Bath Abbey is often said to be the second church of the Diocese of Bath and Wells. It has a rich history and a vibrant ministry that is both local and civic, regional and international. The Abbey is a convening centre for many different parts of our life including not only the City and Deanery of Bath and the Diocese of Bath and Wells but also for others such as Bath's universities and community organisations. It's a place where we mark events of celebration and significance and so has a treasured place in our hearts and memories. As a parish church of the diocese, the Abbey has a committed congregation, an amazing tradition of music and worship, and is a place that seeks every day to give glory to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Recent years have seen the Abbey experience a period of sustained and accelerated change. The Footprint Project saw the Abbey's interior re-ordered and its heating revolutionised by drawing on the hot

water springs that are the origin of Bath as a settlement and city. These developments have been mirrored by the Abbey's growth as a tourist destination. We are proud that thousands pass through its doors every year not only to experience the Abbey's extraordinary architecture and history but also offering us opportunities to share with them the story and good news of Jesus. In order to care for all those who now visit, the Abbey's visitor services and volunteer base have had to grow significantly and rapidly in scale and complexity. In consequence, as well as being a church of God, the Abbey is now also a medium sized business with a large number of employees and a significant turnover.

So what is needed in a new Rector? Above all it is to be the man or woman that God is calling to be the Abbey's principal pastor, leading its people in worship, proclaiming to the people of Bath and many beyond the good news of Jesus Christ, enabling the Abbey to serve Bath for the transformation and care of its community. The Abbey continues to absorb the enormous amounts of change that recent years have seen. This demands that the new Rector will be able to work with everyone with a stake in the Abbey's life to identify and form a strong and compelling vision for its mission and ministry. The vision needed is one that can



inspire the commitment and ownership of everyone involved in the Abbey – from congregation to staff, volunteers to choirs, the Deanery of Bath, its civic community and ecumenical partners to the thousands that visit every year. With strong and effective administrative and management skills, the new Rector will need to be capable of working with the Abbey’s whole team to enable this church to function as an integrated whole, where everyone, worshipper or employee, volunteer or visitor, can give of their best to the glory of God.

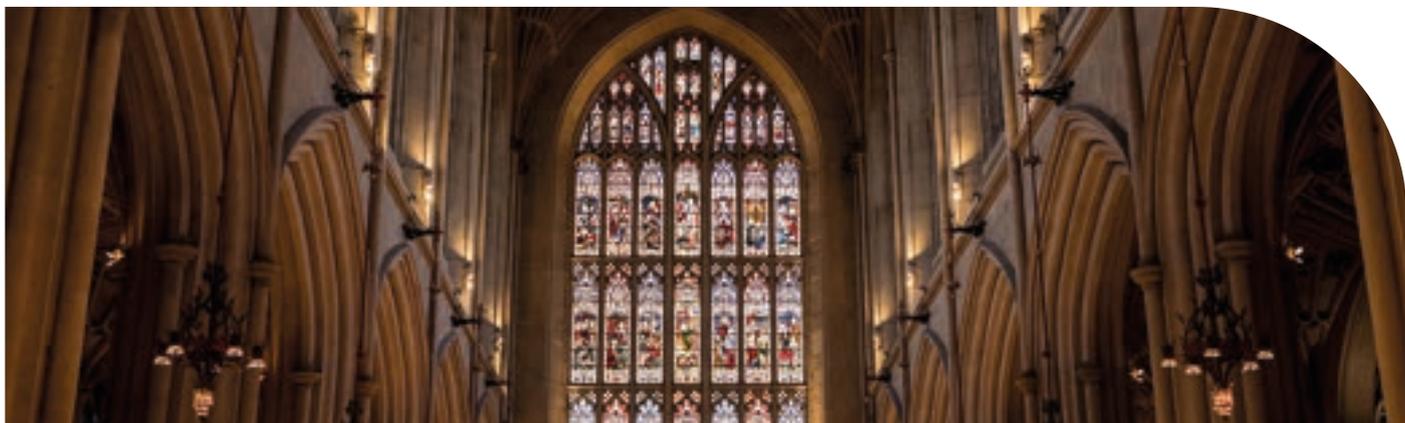


To be the Rector of Bath Abbey is undoubtedly a big job. Yet it offers a platform for mission and ministry that is extraordinary within the life of the Church. It is a role that will demand much but gives the opportunity for the right person to make a huge difference for God in our world. As a diocese we look forward to supporting and helping the person appointed as much as we can – through mentoring, by offering training and all support that may be needed. We look forward to welcoming a colleague who will not only serve Bath Abbey but who will play a valued and honoured role in the life and counsels of our whole diocese. Thank you for considering if that person might be you.



+ Michael.

Bishop Michael



From the Chairman of Simeon's Trustees, Patron of the Benefice

It is doubtful whether there is a parish church in England more strategically situated for mission, and in which the peace and reconciliation of the gospel is so profoundly expressed, than Bath Abbey – its buildings and Christian community. It is a life-station, The Lantern of the West, an anchor in the midst of an anxious culture, a proclamation of God's faithfulness, an oasis of prayer. It has been a catalyst and servant of mission across the whole city, working with and uniting Bath's churches (of whom a significant number are Simeon's benefices).

As patrons, we long to see Christ-led people of godly character leading God's church, who are energised by a passion to communicate the good news of Jesus. We look for those who instinctively equip the whole people of God, and who live out the message of the cross. Bath Abbey's next Rector will ideally combine a winsome way with people – whether they walk through the door on holiday or have served faithfully for years – with an entrepreneurial missionary heart. They will need wisdom and discernment – there are so many possibilities!

Finally, we share with whoever is the next Rector a deep sense of privilege and responsibility at being able to play a part in this story. This is why, in the spirit of

Charles Simeon our founder, we approach each appointment as a spiritual process. It sounds obvious, but prayerful discernment is at the heartbeat of the way we seek to operate. We serve each candidate, whether appointed or not, believing that every process can be an opportunity for God's grace. Fundamentally, we put the needs of the parish first, as Simeon told us to – the congregations, staff, visitors, outliers and incomers...

May God bless you as you listen for His leading, and be assured of our prayers.

Guy Donegan-Cross
Chair, Simeon's Trustees





Bath Abbey: Who we are and what we do

Our Purpose and Mission

The purpose of Bath Abbey is to live and tell the Good News of Jesus. This statement is the opening sentence in all our orders of service and it was chosen because it echoes the vision statement of the diocese of Bath and Wells.

Our Abbey Congregation

While our city-centre geographical parish has a tiny residential population, the Abbey congregation is a gathered community drawn from across the city and surrounding areas.

Currently, there are 345 people on the electoral roll.

We are committed to nurturing the spiritual life of our congregations in various ways, through quality of preaching, our home groups, prayer groups, short courses and one-off events, so as to integrate faith and life.

After extensive consultation with our congregation, staff, volunteers and external organisations, we can say with confidence that we have a lot for which to be grateful and to celebrate. Our congregations said they want to be a dynamic church at the centre of the community. They said that lots

of things were working well (they quoted liturgy, preaching, chaplaincy) but added that in-depth biblical teaching, and the application of faith to life would be helpful, as would more prayer opportunities (in groups and partnerships as well as in prayer ministry). Two objectives they identified were “developing fellowship into friendship” and “encouragement to expect more from God”.

Contributions under the heading of ‘hopes and dreams’ include:

- integrating the congregations better into one ‘Abbey family’
- developing our outreach – civic / ecumenical / interfaith
- engaging with the business community of the city
- attracting more students.

Our Services

We offer a diverse range of regular services in a wide range of styles, both choral and without music: BCP, Common Worship orders one and two, and informal. Full details can be seen at:

www.bathabbey.org/worship-and-music/abbey-services

“Hopes and dreams? Don’t play down – go up a gear!” **Member of the Congregation**



Bath Abbey: Who we are and what we do (cont. 2)

There are also many special and seasonal services: for example, between the eve of Advent Sunday and the Sunday after Christmas, we offered 40 regular services, 9 special seasonal services, 11 Shoppers' Carol Services, 13 services for schools or other organisations, and 4 concerts by our own Music Department. Total attendance numbered in the tens of thousands. In addition, we often host diocesan, and civic events and services. There are also ecumenical services, such as the twice yearly 'Pray for Bath' which brings together Christians from a variety of denominations to pray over issues raised by Bath & N-E Somerset councillors.

Music

The music at Bath Abbey is world class and highly valued. It is a source of attraction and admiration to very many. We have a magnificent organ, five outstanding choirs, and the Abbey Music Group, an unrobed ensemble of singers and instrumentalists. All operate under the oversight of an internationally respected Director of Music and his team.

Glorious music is not an end in itself. We want all our choristers, young and not so young, to understand what they are singing, and why, so that God may be glorified by singers who are developing their faith as

well as their musical skills. To this end we have special activities for all young people in our choirs.

Youth and Children's Work

We are blessed with a growing ministry for children and young people, led by our talented Young People and Families Minister. This centres on the 9.30 Abbey Family service: we offer a crèche for babies and children under three years-old every week and 'Abbey Kids' is a place for young people to encounter God and make new friends along the way. It consists of fun sessions of singing, playing games, reading stories from the Bible and creative crafts.

Once a month, 'Abbey Kids' remain in church for our colourful and creative All Together services.

Mission Action Plan

In 2019, we produced the Abbey's first Mission Action Plan (MAP), '2020 Vision', based on the Five Marks of Mission and designed to inform our thinking and action for six years. There is therefore a need and an opportunity for the new Rector to lead us in developing a fresh vision and a new MAP as soon as they feel able to do so.

Find the current MAP, here:
www.bathabbey.org/worship



Bath Abbey: Who we are and what we do (cont. 3)

Mission Partnerships

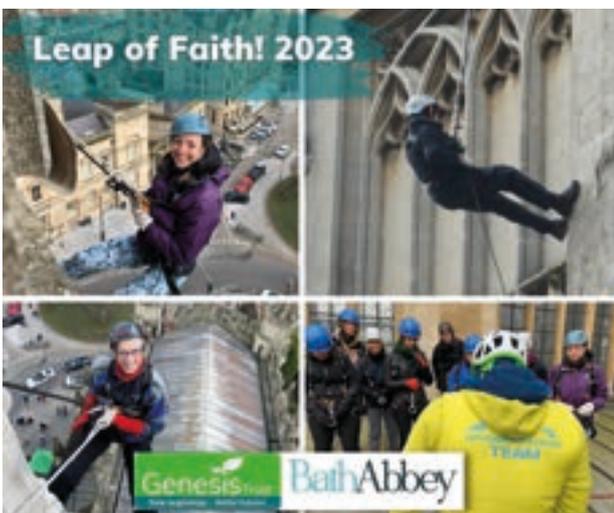
At Bath Abbey we support, work alongside and seek to learn from a wide range of charities and community organisations who do transformative work within our city, nation and wider world to bring greater justice and equality. Among these are some charities who are designated 'Mission Partners' with whom we seek to have a deeper relationship - linking in prayer, advocacy and volunteering as well as financial giving. We are working to ensure a greater mutuality in these partnerships, where we can create space and listen with humility to those with lived experience different from our own, and be challenged as to how this might impact our lives as individuals and our life as a worshipping community.

We host regular Mission Partner Sundays and other events to help increase understanding and awareness of the work of these organisations within the congregation and the wider city.

We currently have five Mission Partners:

- Unseen – tackling Modern Slavery (in UK)
- Genesis Trust – supporting the Homeless and Vulnerable in Bath
- Ripple Effect – supporting farmers and developing sustainable farming practices across Africa (our link is with Zambia)
- Dream Centres – bringing hope through education and community engagement in Mumbai
- A Rocha UK – addressing Climate Change (in UK)

Our partnership with the Christian environmental charity A Rocha UK has led to our currently holding their Eco-Church Silver Award and working towards the Gold Award.





Our Context

The Bishop is keen to encourage Wells Cathedral, Bath Abbey and Taunton Minster to work together in support of his mission to the whole diocese. We want to respond positively to that call.

As the historic ‘mother church’ of the city, the Abbey tries to serve the whole city, engaging with the civic authorities, the two universities, a Further Education College and numerous schools, institutions and businesses, as well as Third Sector organisations.

We play a significant civic and civil role, particularly at times of grief, celebration and commemoration; we are an attractive venue for schools, universities, charities and businesses to hold services or other events; and we are one of the most sought-after concert venues in an exceptionally musical city. In addition to the many concerts (from Radiohead tributes to concerts for the city’s classical music festivals), we also host professional theatre, and curate a wide range of small and large-scale exhibitions and art installations to encourage creative reflection and contemplation for visitors and congregations.

A selection of views from some of those with whom we work is included in this booklet.



“We are delighted to hold our annual graduations in Bath Abbey ...The staff are so helpful and accommodating, nothing is too much trouble.”

Norland College

“The Abbey serves my needs very well – it is a cornerstone in the local area – a beacon one could say as it has such a prominent position in our city.”

Heritage Services, Bath & North East Somerset Council.





The Abbey Church

"It's open. Welcoming, friendly – there's a feeling that God dwells here."
Member of staff

The Building

Building the current Abbey Church – at least the third on the site – was begun in 1499. It is the last great mediæval Cathedral to be built in England, and its fabric is well-maintained, although the Quinquennial Inspection in 2023 identified a need for extensive roof repairs. We have received a substantial donation towards the cost of these, independent of the active and supportive charity The Friends of Bath Abbey, which has contributed huge amounts of money since its formation in 1948 and continues to do so, thanks chiefly to legacies from its loyal membership.

Footprint Project Enabling Mission

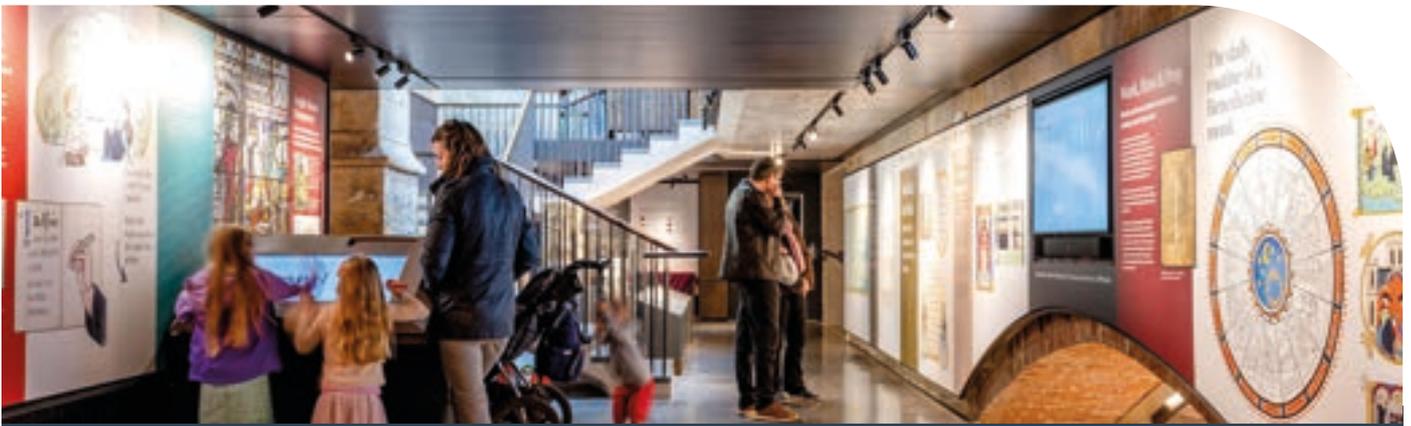
A major restoration and development programme began because the church floor was subsiding. What became the £21m multi-award winning 'Footprint Project', completed in 2021, created new spaces and facilities. It also modernised the Abbey Offices, in a row of houses adjacent to the church. These facilities now greatly enhance the Abbey's ministry and mission, although we are still waiting for DAC approval of the design for new liturgical furniture to complete the renovation of the interior of the church.

We make extensive use of the new Learning Room for activities for children and young people, both as part of our ministry to our own Abbey children and young people and also as part of our educational offerings to schools. Our half-day 'Easter Experience' activity for Key Stage II is widely popular. The Learning Room is also the venue for such outward-facing mission as our Warm Space, our Carers' Café, and the Bath Welcomes Refugees language classes.

Visitor Services - one of Britain's most visited Churches

The fact that our beautiful, Grade 1 listed building is rooted and steeped in centuries of prayer, plus the blessed accident of its location right at the heart of a UNESCO World Heritage city, means that we attract hundreds of thousands of visitors from Britain and around the world as worshippers, pilgrims and tourists.

It is our ambition that every visitor, whatever their reason for coming, will sense the presence of God in the Abbey, and we would like to do more to encourage visitors, attendees at events and occasional worshippers to become regular members of the Abbey Community, as well as reach out to completely new or currently under-represented groups.



Challenges

Financial Sustainability and Visitor Footfall

Chief among the challenges we face is the need to become financially sustainable. Since we are reliant on visitors for funding, the pandemic seriously undermined our financial model. In 2023 we started charging visitors (other than Bath residents and people wishing to pray) to visit the Abbey. Visitor footfall has not yet returned to pre-Covid levels in any of Bath's tourist attractions and the cost-of-living crisis is hitting us hard. Our Benefice Share of the diocesan Common Fund is substantial and is not close to being matched by Planned Giving income.

In consequence of this challenge, we have sought to increase our revenue from 'heritage' events but this has sometimes led to competing priorities for our resources and a tension between the worship and the commercial aspects of Bath Abbey.

We are once again paying our Benefice Share. Accounts for 2025 are not yet finalised or audited.

Communication

There is scope for better communication between the departments which make up the 'Abbey Staff', and for the congregation to have much better knowledge and understanding of the issues the staff are facing, and vice versa.

Becoming more Diverse and Accessible

We believe that we are a friendly and welcoming community but we are also aware that in some parts of the city, we are seen as 'posh' and it is our desire to become more diverse and more representative of and accessible to the community we serve. This includes the age demographic as well as the many other areas of diversity and inclusion.

We are aware that it is not enough to say 'everyone is welcome' – we need to create the environment where we actually make it easier and more accessible for people who are currently under-represented to be part of the Abbey community.

Our Learning Department has been at the forefront of working to highlight the Abbey's historical links to the transatlantic slave trade, but there is still much to be done. We want to be open about our past and inclusive of those who still carry the burden and hurt today, as part of our commitment to racial justice and in line with the Church of England's 'From Lament to Action' report.

For full details of what this means in practice, please see: www.bathabbey.org/anti-racism. According to the most recent census data, the population of Bath is 85% 'white British' (Bath and N-E Somerset is



Challenges (cont. 2)

90%), but we do not yet have 15% of our congregation of Global Majority Heritage.

Bath Abbey is committed to engaging prayerfully and thoughtfully with Living in Love and Faith. We have chosen to offer the LLF Prayers of Love and Faith when they are pastorally requested within our services, as part of our commitment to welcome and inclusion. We seek to hold difference with grace, rooting our common life in scripture and tradition, demonstrating the love of Christ for everyone.

We have good relationships with the two universities and the schools and colleges in the city, including hosting services, ceremonies and exhibitions, but we do not have many of their students in our congregations. We know we need to do more to attract and retain new cohorts of children and young people and we are also aware that there is scope to develop better relationships with the business community around us in the city.

“We’re trying to do too much and not adhering to what we proclaim.”

Member of staff



Capacity because of our offering

We also have issues around the capacity of clergy, staff and volunteers to deliver the number and scope of services, worship events and visitor experiences to which we currently aspire, both qualitatively and quantitatively.





What are we looking for?

Personal qualities

In the course of our consultations, the most frequently mentioned personal attributes are 'a people person', a good listener, able to motivate and inspire, confident, outgoing, willing to be visible, resilient, and possessed of a sense of humour.

Team player

Despite competing priorities, we work very collaboratively as a team and aspire to do so more effectively. We do not expect an incoming rector to do everything themselves, but to lead and inspire us – congregations, volunteers and staff alike.

Spiritual qualities

As for spiritual qualities, we take 'prayerful' as a given, and the willingness and ability to develop our faith-life as disciples. To those we add 'a heart for mission', as an ambassador to the community, able to build links and partnerships, in line with the aspirations we have expressed above.

Financial acumen

Experience of leadership and management in a large, complex organisation is essential, and some business experience and financial literacy is important. We are eager to have someone who wants - and has the skills - to manage the inevitable tension between the commercial, heritage and worship aspects of

the Abbey and has the experience to do so.

Appreciation of music

An appreciation of a wide range of music and an understanding of the importance of music to worship at the Abbey are highly desirable.

"It is very important to me that the next Rector values and supports the Abbey's engagement with the wider community through events. I hope they will see external partnerships and cultural programming not as an inconvenience, the lowest priority, or simply a financial necessity, but as an exciting missional opportunity: a way to welcome, host, and build meaningful connections with people across the city and beyond."

Member of staff

"We feel so blessed that our son has found the choir. Not only for the experience but also for having Huw Williams (Director of Music) as a mentor. He is a huge asset to this establishment. He is truly talented and also someone who deeply cares for the development of the children, and equally for the service they provide to worshippers."

Choir parent





Person Description

The next Rector will be the best person for the role regardless of their background or gender.

This is an exceptionally challenging post, and will require a range of skills that have been clearly demonstrated in the person's previous roles. Previous commercial experience is desirable, but they do need to have demonstrated that they can lead an operation with a significant business dimension, and have a measure of financial acumen – which could be gained from being an incumbent of a substantial parish with a complex range of activities and resources, or running a complex church organisation with significant financial demands, such as a theological college.

They will have proven ability in leading both congregations and staff teams, and have some experience of being a leader or member of teams that have worked intentionally on their own processes and development.

They will bring experience in successfully discerning a vision and developing a strategy for a comparable church or similar organisation. They will be an excellent preacher and teacher, with theological acumen, and able to lead worship well, and

'hold the space'. They will have a love of music in a wide range of styles.

They need to be relational and have a pastoral instinct that communicates to the congregations, the staff and volunteers, and the wider community – they need to be actively present across the life of the Abbey. They will bring clear expectations that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and will bring experience of fostering a positive, challenge-friendly, safe, and healthy culture where unacceptable behaviours have no place.

They will have theological and practical wisdom to enable the Abbey to develop the right relationship between its mission as a church and the activities that generate income to enable it to be such a church.

They need to have experience building community links and exercising a public role in a community.

The energy required for this job does not preclude it being a person's last post, but it may well suit someone in their penultimate role.



What can we offer?

The existing Clergy and Ministry team

The new Rector will be joining the Abbey Pastor (currently the Acting Rector) and the Abbey Missioner, one self-supporting minister and an associate priest with P.T.O., as well as a Lay Reader and others who assist in leading services. We have a gifted Young People and Families Minister, who works with the Director of Music and the rest of the Ministry Team.

Supportive congregation

We believe that we have much we can offer by way of prayerful, pastoral support from a loyal congregation, led by two experienced and hard-working Churchwardens. In the course of preparing this profile, we have established that the congregation is open to change that is well-communicated.

The Executive Director and staff team

There is a staff of 27 employees, led by an Executive Director who oversees much of the commercial activity of the Abbey, assisted by department heads. There is administrative support for the clergy. The 'Abbey Leadership Team' consists of the stipendiary clergy, the Churchwardens, the Executive Director, and the Heads of Finance, Visitor Services, Operations and Music. There is an organisational structure chart at the end of this booklet.

Volunteers

In addition to the staff, we have an army of volunteers with a wide range of gifts and talents, eager to serve: 75 who work in

support of worship, 260 who support Visitor Experience, including 17 chaplains, ordained and lay, who minister to visitors. The Abbey Shop has a manager and five supporting members of staff, assisted by 23 volunteers.

Parish Safeguarding

We have a very competent Parish Safeguarding Officer.

Group ministry with St Michael's

We are fortunate to be in a Group Ministry with St Michael's Without, whose Rector is currently the Area Dean and whose facilities we often use. There is an engaged Clergy Chapter in the deanery of Bath, and we are blessed with good ecumenical relations.

Rectory

The Rectory is a modern, detached, four-bedroom house with a garden at 12, Cleveland Walk, BA2 6JX a mile to the east of the Abbey. More details may be had on application.

There are no schools in the parish but there are many good ones in the area. For state schools, see www.locrating.com/the-best-secondary-schools-in-Bath_Somerset_England.aspx and for independent schools see www.isc.co.uk/schools/england/somerset/bath/

The Rector has use of a reserved carpark space at St John the Evangelist (RC), about 250m from the Abbey.



Bath

With a population of nearly 95,000, Bath is the largest city in Somerset (and therefore in the Diocese of Bath & Wells). It is part of the unitary authority of Bath & North-East Somerset which has its own chairman and council, but Bath retains its mayor and 'charter trustees' who are the councillors for the wards within the city. Bath lies in the valley of the River Avon, with hills rising to north and south from the centre of it. It is 97 miles west of London and 11 miles south-east of Bristol. It became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1987, and was later added to the transnational World Heritage Site known as the "Great Spa Towns of Europe" in 2021. Over a million litres of mineral water gush up from the Hot Spring daily – the Abbey is trying to harness that energy which is otherwise lost down the Roman drain into the River Avon.

Bath is famous for its Roman Baths and Georgian architecture (and connections to Jane Austen), but its Abbey represents the contribution of the Middle Ages to that history.

Bath once had an important industrial sector – cranes, furniture, printing, brass foundries, quarries, dye works and plasticine manufacture, as well as many mills.

Nowadays, manufacturing is in decline, but the city boasts strong software, publishing and service-oriented industries, and the international manufacturing company Rotork

has its headquarters in the city. The city's attraction to tourists (over 6 million visitors a year) has led to a significant number of jobs in tourism-related industries. Important economic sectors in Bath include education and health (30,000 jobs in 2011), retail, tourism and leisure (14,000) and business and professional services (10,000).

Bath Rugby is the city's best-known club but many other sports are practised too. The Bath Half-Marathon takes place annually in March in the streets of the city. TeamBath is the umbrella name for all the University of Bath sports teams, and provides training facilities for many national and international athletes in a wide range of sports – athletics, badminton, basketball, bob skeleton, bobsleigh, hockey, judo, modern pentathlon, netball, rugby union, swimming, tennis, triathlon and volleyball.

At the centre of the coat of arms of the city of Bath is a shield depicting the city wall with above it, symbols of the mineral springs and the river Avon. In the centre is a sword, and on the sword, a pair of keys. These latter symbols represent St Peter and St Paul, the patron saints of the Abbey. This means that Bath Abbey is right at the heart of the City of Bath, not merely geographically, but at the heart of the community. We, whose church it is, want that presence to be more than symbolic, we want it to make an actual difference to the lives of the people who live and work here.



“Bath Abbey continues to play a vital role in the wellbeing of our community, offering support, connection and compassion to residents of all ages. It is a place where our community comes together to mark significant moments and like so much of Bath also draws in many tourists to enjoy its purpose, history and architecture.”

Bath is a city of hospitality, and the Abbey, as the predominant Church of the city, can model this in Christian welcome through the way in which it opens up its holy space to be an open space to all people of all faiths and no faith. It also has a critical role in drawing together people across the whole community of Bath.”

Cllr Kevin Guy, Leader of Bath & North East Somerset Council

“While working in the Abbey’s Learning Centre, I saw the power of hospitality, learning and community-building at work. People who would never see themselves entering a church found belonging there through language, conversation and welcome. Many described feeling “safe,” “held,” or “seen” within the walls of the Abbey - before ever encountering the liturgy.”

Bath Artists’ Studios

“For the University of Bath, Bath Abbey is a symbol of the rich heritage of our city. The University is very proud to be part of the city and greatly appreciates the use of the Abbey for our graduation ceremonies and carol services. We ... are keen for the Abbey to continue to provide a link between the city and our University, as we consider this a very important relationship.”

Professor Phil Taylor, Vice-Chancellor & President, University of Bath

“I have a long and intimate relationship with Bath Abbey ... I am now a Chapter Member of Wells Cathedral and regularly remind my colleagues that we are the Diocese of Bath and Wells. I would like to make a great deal more of this partnership - two of the most sublime works of human creation just 20 miles apart.”

Edward Bayntun-Coward DL





The Diocesan Statement

Welcome to the Diocese of Bath and Wells



We are delighted that you are considering whether this post of Rector of Bath Abbey in the Diocese of Bath and Wells might be right for you. To help your prayerful discernment we want

to share with you our diocesan vision for growth and transformation, within which we hope your own ministry might flourish.

A vision for growth and transformation

In light of the challenges and opportunities we face, our aim across all our parishes is growing our churches, within and beyond our church buildings, in both numbers and depth of faith, so that we can better work for the transforming of our communities and the life of God's Kingdom amongst us.

Our shared priorities

To help us pursue this aim, we invite churches across our diocese to focus on five particular areas of our ministry together. We ask all incumbents in our diocese to make these their priorities, understanding that what they look like in practice will vary in each place.

To value, cherish and develop the people and resources we already have

We love and affirm our churches and congregations, aiming to ensure each person is well supported and equipped as a follower of Jesus Christ and for any ministries they are called to undertake.

To develop new Christian worshipping communities

Whether through new forms of worship, church revitalisations or church plants, we seek to offer people in our communities opportunities to connect with the good news of Jesus.

To share in ministry and leadership

We are committed to a model of shared local ministry: raising up and equipping lay and ordained leaders able to share together in leading the church and serving God's world.

To deepen and grow faith

We long to see children, young people and young adults, having more opportunities to discover, explore and grow in faith and for people of all ages to deepen and grow in faith.

To transform communities

We seek to work in partnership with our communities to serve the common good and to pursue the transformation of society, by God's grace, to reflect the Kingdom.

The Diocesan Statement (cont. 2)

Our challenge to you

When he talks about his own ministry in 1 Corinthians, Paul captures the dynamic we are seeking to achieve. “I planted,” he says, “Apollos watered, but God gave the growth” (1 Cor 3: 6). We know that our churches will only flourish and grow as a result of God’s action among us – it is God who gives the growth.

But Paul is also clear that we have a part to play too – in watering and planting, in doing the things that enable the conditions for God’s growth to be supported. So our challenge to each benefice is to see what it would take to growth by one adult and one child net during the coming year?

Our support for you

We aim to be a diocese that offers high support to help you meet these challenges and opportunities. We have an outstanding diocesan team who are focussed on parish support, offering specialist advice in both practical and missional areas.

Clergy wellbeing is a priority for us and our confidential Counselling and Wellbeing Service is available at no cost to you and your family. We model collegiate working in every area of the diocese, including deaneries, where working together is encouraged and supported. The Bishops and Archdeacons carry out a regular programme of benefice visits to learn about the life of local churches, and your MDR is conducted within the context of these visits.

Your ministry in this Diocese

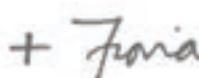
In summary, we are looking and praying for clergy who will:

- be committed to praying and intentionally seeking the growth and flourishing of the benefices in their care.
- relish and expect to work in an environment that offers high challenge and high support.
- work joyfully and collaboratively with those who share with them locally in ministry and leadership, with their congregations and with others in their locality, to identify ways to grow and develop their churches with the grain of local priorities, resources, skills and passions.
- enjoy working in partnership with deanery and diocesan colleagues.

We hope that you’d like to join us on the adventure and course we’ve set for our next ten years. We’re praying that God will send us the right labourers for the harvest that God has set before us. Might this be you?



Bishop Michael



Bishop Fiona



Archdeacon of Bath



Bath Deanery Statement

Bath Deanery serves the city of Bath and the surrounding villages through 21 parishes and 39 churches, bringing together a diverse and growing Christian presence. Ministry is shared by clergy and laity in a deliberately collaborative, relational way, so that leadership is exercised together across large and small churches, established congregations and newer communities.

The Deanery is not an extra layer of church life but a vital space where ministry is sustained, vocations are encouraged, and hope is renewed. Participation in Chapter, Deanery Synod and informal networks reduces isolation, deepens shared prayer and learning, and enables wise, collective planning for change. This mutual support is especially important where many serve in small teams or rural contexts.

Our common life is shaped by three priorities. **Prayerfulness** draws on the breadth of Christian tradition and helps us listen to God together, as we give and receive prayer across the Deanery. **Hospitality** is a generous, open-hearted understanding of church, rooted in our unity in Christ and in partnerships across parish boundaries, traditions and ministries. It includes holding the pain and mistrust arising from LLF and PLF, while choosing to walk forward together in hope. **Mission and innovation** keep us rooted in the parish-church pattern while we develop Fresh

Expressions, pioneer work, chaplaincy, and shared youth and schools ministry, responding faithfully to contemporary life.

Deanery structures enable shared leadership, as Chapter, Synod and informal relationships help leaders encourage one another, share resources, address social need and support initiatives beyond the capacity of individual parishes. Like the wider CofE, our deanery chapter holds a breadth of opinion and practice, but is more willing to live alongside difference and treat diversity as a gift. It seeks to cultivate respect, generosity and good listening, and to create spaces for honest yet hopeful conversation, modelling collaboration across difference.

We seek leaders who will invest in the shared life of the Deanery, embody collaborative and relational leadership, and encourage the gifts of others – clergy and lay, adults, children and young people. We look for those who build a culture where people are valued and who contribute to robust safeguarding and the well-being of all. Participation in the Deanery sustains one another, helps discern God's call and enables the Church in Bath to grow in spiritual depth and number.

Rev Roger Driver - Area Dean
Christine Absolon - Lay Dean



Bath Abbey Group Ministry

The Group Ministry between Bath Abbey and St Michael's has been in place for some time and offers a framework for working together across our two parishes. We recognise that it is not yet fully understood or experienced by everyone, and is still growing into its purpose. Both remain distinct city-centre parishes, each with its own identity, worshipping life, PCC, churchwardens, finances, and buildings. The Group Ministry is not intended to blur these differences, but to enable an intentional partnership that strengthens each parish's particular calling and our shared mission in Bath.

The appointment of a new Rector at Bath Abbey offers a fresh opportunity. By listening carefully, building relationships within the Abbey community and with St Michael's, and engaging thoughtfully with the existing framework, a new Rector can help the Group Ministry become more relational and purposeful. The current framework is stable yet flexible, giving space to experiment, learn, and grow in confidence together.

At St Michael's, we are open to further development and recognise the need for deliberate investment in people, relationships, and common ground, so that the Group Ministry becomes less about structures and more about shared life and mission. We look with hope to what God will do among us. With time, trust, and prayer, this can become a life-giving partnership that supports flourishing ministry at Bath Abbey and St Michael's and strengthens the Church's witness across the city of Bath.

Rev Roger Driver – Rector of St Michael's





Facts, Figures and References

SUNDAY	8.00 Holy communion	9.30 Church Family Communion	11.30 Sung Eucharist	3.30 Choral Evensong	6.30 Informal Service
MONDAY	8.30 Morning Prayer			5.30 Evening Prayer	
TUESDAY	8.30 Morning Prayer			5.30 Choral Evensong	
WEDNESDAY	8.30 Morning Prayer		12.00 Holy Communion	5.30 Evening Prayer	
THURSDAY	8.30 Morning Prayer			5.30 Choral Evensong	
FRIDAY	8.30 Holy Communion			5.30 Evening Prayer	
SATURDAY				Occasional Choral Evensong at 5.00	

Numbers:

Electoral Roll – 345

Volunteers – 75 who work in support of worship, 260 who support Visitor Experience, including 17 chaplains, ordained and lay, who minister to visitors. [Guided ‘floor’ tours, Tower Tours.]

Usual Sunday attendance 2025:

Over 16 450

Under 16 45 (including choristers)

Easter Day 2025: 1390

Christmas Eve/Day 2025: 3992

Baptisms: 2 children, 1 adult

Confirmations: 3 under 18, 4 adults

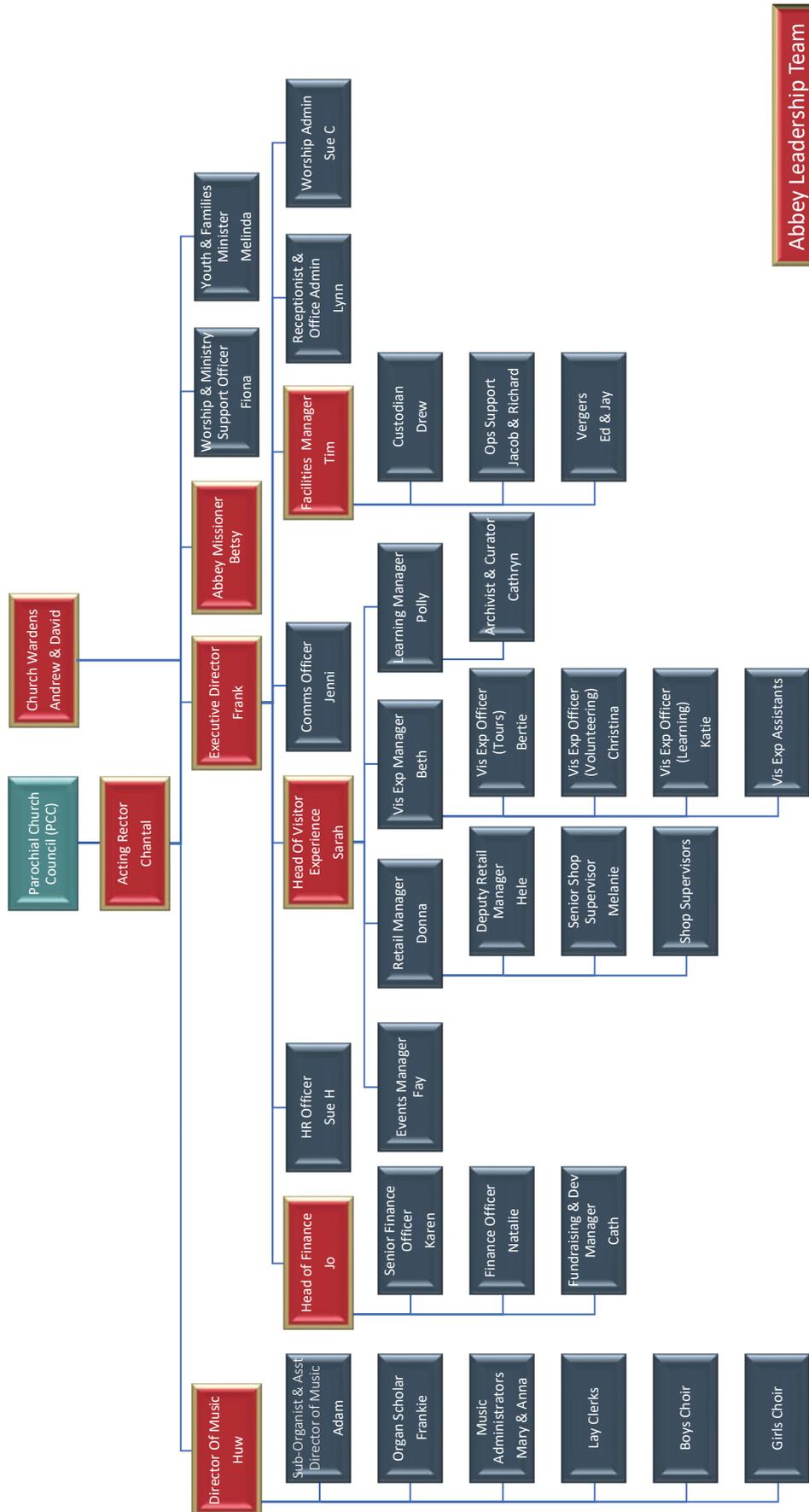
Weddings: 5

Summary of financial position. (full accounts on application)

- Annual turnover for the Abbey is typically £2.8m. However, in 2025, due to a significant donation, turnover will be circa £4.5m
- Visitor Income is our main income stream and generates c£1.4m pa.
- Other income streams include: Planned Giving - c£210kpa; Shop turnover c£460k pa; Tours Income c£300k pa and Events Income c£250k pa
- The Abbey’s largest overhead is salaries which are in excess of £1.1m pa.
- The Abbey’s Benefice Share in 2025 was £310k which was paid in full.
- Our Financial Year end is 31 December and in 2025 we are likely to make a small operating deficit, though overall a net surplus of in excess of £1m will be achieved.

Staff Organisation Structure Chart

Bath Abbey Organisation Structure Chart - January 2026





Thoughts from our Youngest Members

The Melody Makers (aged 6 – 10)

- I like the echo of the music in the spacious area.
- I like the Abbey because it creates good memories of times with friends and family. The music helps with any emotion, such as anger and sadness. It is also a great place to meet the rest of the community.
- I like the organs because it is very cheerful and joyful.
- I like that the abbey is very peaceful and a very big place to sing. Also there are lots of choirs that sing great and I love being a Melody Maker.
- I like the abbey because the Christmas tree at Christmas and like all oldness of it and I would like it to stay old and I don't want any modernness on the building.
- I like the songs. I like the warmups. I love the parties.
- I like the fact that we get to perform in services and learn to sing!
- I like the Abbey because it is a sacred place.
- I like the hymns.
- I like melody makers because we do services. **I think we should have a Rector who is nice and humorous but also sensible.**
- I like the Abbey. It is beautiful and I like the fact that as a melody maker we get to join the services. It feels like an honour to be part of the church community.
- I like how anyone can come to the abbey and enjoy music and services. I love how friendly everyone in the abbey is and how amazing the building is.
- I like that when the grown ups are chatting that we get to do fun things downstairs. I also like the parties.
- I love the acoustics where you sing in the services and I love the choirs and the parties and rehearsals when you get to sing!
- I love the organs because they make a lovely sound.
- The abbey is an extremely intricate and amazing building! I love every time I go here because it's warm and comforting and quiet. I love how we get to join in with the services. **I think the new person should be kind and considerate whilst being faithful to God.**
- I love Bath Abbey's history. We are stepping in countless people's footsteps when we step in Bath Abbey. **I would like the person to be enthusiastic in our welfare and they appreciate the history of Bath Abbey.**
- I love the acoustics and it is such a beautiful place to sing. Melody makers is such a magical choir and I can't wait for the next rehearsal. **I think the person should be nice and friendly and good at singing and very cheerful.**

“The Chapter have asked me to write to you to advise that Bath Abbey is in our prayers as you discern the next stage of your vocational journey serving the City of Bath and the wider diocese. When your new Rector is in place, we very much look forward to exploring the possibilities of the shared ministry of the Cathedral, Bath Abbey and Taunton Minster supporting Bishop Michael’s mission to the whole Diocese.”

**The Very Reverend Toby Wright,
Dean of Wells**



“Let the Abbey be a lightning rod from Heaven to Earth and a stairway from Earth to Heaven.”

Volunteer Visitor Services Steward



BathAbbey

Address

Bath Abbey
Abbey Office
9 Kingston Buildings
Bath BA1 1LT

Contact

office@bathabbey.org
01225 422462

Registered charity number • 1134081

