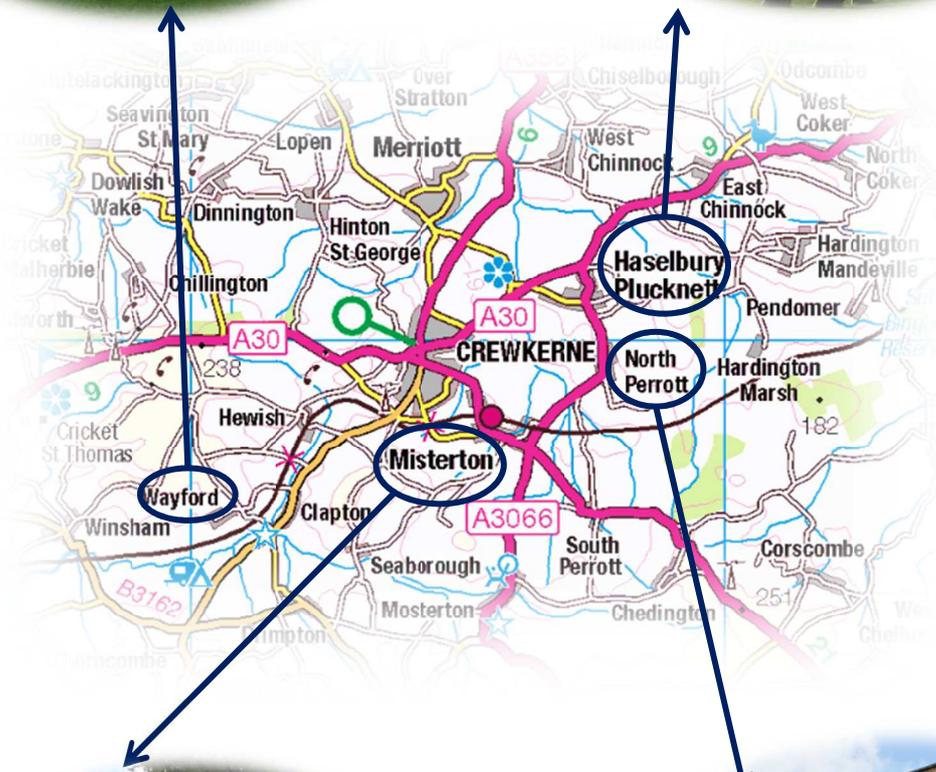


**A Profile for the villages of the Wulfric Benefice:  
Misterton, Haselbury Plucknett, North Perrott and Wayford.**



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## **Our Vision**

Working together, we seek to nurture and grow our communities through telling the story of a God who loves, inspires, empowers and transforms us. We seek to share God's love with all; reaching out to those in need; prioritising young families and their children and helping our church members to live out the gospel in their daily lives.

The future of our Benefice and our village churches is uncertain and we know that we cannot assume business as usual; we believe that to survive and thrive our church communities must be open and accommodating to radical change in the broadest sense; whether it be patterns or style of worship; use of church buildings; availability of clergy or lay readers. We believe that our church buildings must be opened up for use by the wider community and not necessarily used just for formal worship; this is important in order to remain relevant and valued by our communities. We believe that whilst we are inspired by God's love and wish to extend it to others, our focus should be on engagement with the wider community in ways that are not restricted to formal religious worship.

We believe in nurturing and growing new, creative and innovative approaches as to how we maintain our faith and extend our reach to others not currently engaged with our faith or our churches. We want to embrace a modern approach that is relevant and meaningful to all generations, that is action oriented and engaged with the pressing issues of today.

## **We Offer**

- An opportunity to minister in a range of unique and well-maintained churches in a beautiful part of Somerset that is close to Dorset's historic Jurassic Coast.
- Capable and reliable teams who deal with the day to day running of each church.
- A rich and imaginative range of worship from the evangelical to the liberal, many of the special services are instigated and organised by the local PCCs and by community groups.
- A group of helpful, practical and supportive church wardens.
- Excellent links with first and middle schools in the area
- Finances well managed
- Our congregations are not large and tend to be elderly, but they take an active role in supporting our community
- Strong links with our local communities, including Yeovil, Crewkerne and Chard
- A wonderful modern rectory in Crewkerne (please refer to St Barts Profile for details)

## **Our Priorities**

### **Caring for our Communities**

- Showing the love of God to fellow human beings
- Enriching peoples' lives throughout our communities
- Provide a haven for those who are in need
- Meeting people, spreading the mission of God, and caring for all
- We are keen to make the churches work for the whole community
- We would like to grow our congregations
- Rebuilding bridges and building hope across the Benefice
- Finding volunteers to help sustain Misterton PCC and other churches in the Benefice
- Our parishes have a lot in common and more to gain from being closer to one another across the Benefice ..

### **Our buildings in our communities**

- Use of churches for music performances, recordings, clubs, meetings and learning – thinking of new ways of interesting people across the benefice
- Modify church spaces to support our schools' needs
- New roof for Haselbury (Quinquennial report finding)
- Developing the church building in Haselbury for community use to provide Village Hall type facilities whilst maintaining its religious focus.
- New facilities in North Perrott – needed to support our hospitable welcome
- New facilities for Misterton

### **Caring for God's Kingdom**

- Making the church relevant to and helping to mitigate ecological damage
- Linking the stewardship of God's Earth to the climate change debate
- Engaging with human tragedies

### **Growing in Faith**

- We are hoping to explore new ways of nurturing the life of faith for existing church members as well as others who may be searching for answers to the big questions during this crisis.

### **Partnering with our schools and families**

- Building relationships with our schools and children
- Making the church more relevant to young people and families whilst accommodating the needs of existing congregations

## **We Would Like An Incumbent Who Will**

### **Help us move forward well into the future**

- Understand the problems facing small, rural communities, and have ideas about growing our congregations, developing a younger and wider church membership
- Be open to using our churches for wider uses and benefit of our communities
- Help develop lay ministries

### **Understand our rural context**

- Appreciate and understand our rural way of life and the diversity of our worship and communities.
- Be prepared to spend time travelling amongst the rural parishes
- Value the smaller parishes on an equal footing with Crewkerne and participate in the life of our villages.
- Recognise the villages' strong identities and help all to feel more a part of the benefice, strengthening the family of Christ

### **Help us to deepen and diversify our faith:**

- Lead us and nurture our quiet yet deep rooted faith, developing a strong community of believers.
- Be flexible, open to and comfortable with different styles of worship across the benefice and be able to deliver the same Christian message to different audiences in a language and style that they can relate to.
- Be a preacher to inspire, give concise sermons and speak well so that everyone can hear.

### **Have a heart for the care of our World: for the environment and the bigger questions**

- Be cognisant of the problems facing the world, such as the climate and ecological emergency and human tragedies; be prepared to address these issues head on and to provide consistent leadership by example.
- Be kind, caring, cheerful and someone we can engage with as a person across a wide range of issues.

### **We Would Like An Incumbent Who Has The Following Additional Skills And Qualities**

- We seek someone who has great empathy, is approachable and understands the varied spiritual needs of people from a wide range of church backgrounds and experience of faith
- A Rector who will share this excitement, foster it in others and bring some vision and ideas of their own
- Is a team player who is able to lead and develop others to bring the best out of them
- A Rector who will help grow a strong and meaningful faith in all our communities
- Can ensure there is good teaching in our churches, week in and week out, to help us grow in faith and relevance
- We need strong leadership to help us harness and manage the ideas, talents, enthusiasm and goodwill of individuals in our churches and the wider community

## Who We Are

### Wayford



**Julia Borland** Churchwarden,  
PCC Secretary



**Mike Kimber**, Churchwarden

The parish of Wayford lies to the south west of Crewkerne and is rural in nature. This small, attractive village is situated on a south facing slope above the valley of the River Axe.

There are 54 properties in the parish with a few second homes. The population is the normal rural mix of agricultural workers, commuters and retirees. However, there are several families in the village now with children under 10 years old.

The village is rather secluded. About half the houses, including the oldest ones, are spread out for about a quarter of a mile along a no through road. The lane leads to Wayford Woods, which are very popular with dog walkers and families. It can be quite busy at weekends and holidays and during lockdown. Most of the remaining properties are spread in the opposite direction for about a mile along a lane.



**Church interior.**



**View over valley of the Axe from  
the churchyard.**

The linear nature of the village means that there is no focal point other than the Church which is towards the end of the road next to Wayford Manor. Communication through the elongated village has been greatly improved in 2020 by the creation of a WhatsApp group to keep people connected during the pandemic and even the Church Porch was pressed into service as a point of distribution for provisions ordered by groups of villagers.

The Liberty Trail, a 28 mile path from Ham Hill, north of Crewkerne, to Lyme Regis, was walked by men going to join the Monmouth rebellion in 1685, passes through the village.



Although lying within the Parish of Crewkerne, the village of Clapton on the Lyme Regis road, at the foot of Wayford Hill, is more associated with Wayford. Indeed, the village hall is called Clapton and Wayford Village Hall

**Gerry Reilly**, Retired Priest

and provides an active focal point for both communities hosting a range of clubs and events.

### Haselbury Plucknett

The village of Haselbury Plucknett has about 700 inhabitants, a C of E First School and 2 popular hospitality businesses which attract visitors from a wide area. The main employer is a large thriving dairy farm, which uses the land surrounding the village to grow its cattle feed.



**Jonnie Barnes Yallowley,**  
Churchwarden

Village inhabitants include all age groups with a significant number of young families with children of school age, both 'blue-collar' families earning their living in local light industry, agriculture, and professional families. There is also some unemployment. We have a mix of old and newer properties with some recent in-fill development.



**Julian Brooks,**  
Churchwarden and Lay  
Dean for Crewkerne

Although the great majority of homes are owner-occupied, there is also a small area of social housing and a growing number of holiday lets.



**Andrew Daynes,**  
Retired Priest

Before COVID halted community activities there was a flourishing Gardening Club and WI, and thanks to enthusiastic community participation, the village won a Silver award for Haselbury in Bloom. In normal years, village life is enhanced by a Community Orchard on centrally situated Glebe Land and the annual Spring Fete jointly run by Church and School. The current lack of a Village Hall has prompted parishioners to explore a greater use of the church building for community activities. In the past few years, it has accommodated concerts, plays and exhibitions.



**Hilde Bucknell,**  
Lay Reader

### Misterton

About a mile and a half southeast of Crewkerne lies the small village of Misterton and which is linear in its nature with the Dorchester road (A356) running through it. From the hills in the south of the parish, two streams rise; one runs north into the River Parrett at the border with the parish of Haselbury Plucknett and then to the Bristol Channel; the other heads south over the parish and county border into Dorset and thence to the English Channel. The houses are built mainly of stone with traditional clay tiled roofs, but a few are still thatched. A spirit of good neighbourliness abounds.



**Rob Jeffreys** Church Warden

We remain rural in nature and agriculture is still important in our community and our economy with some four working farms in the parish and a milk processing plant thriving on the edges of our

village. Other employers in the village include our local garage (with a Ford dealership) and a builders' merchants. In the last five years, a new development of a hundred houses was completed just to the north of the railway station and, currently, another development of fifteen houses or so is nearing completion on the south side of the tracks. It is to be anticipated that, from the Census figure of 826 in 2011, the present population is more in the order of 1250 people, covering all age groups but weighted somewhat towards the retired.

Misterton has been renowned for its spirit of "Can Do!" It boasts a large recreation field from land gifted to the villagers in 1924 and on which there is a Multi-Use Games area, a playground and a large village hall which was built in 1978. Although, naturally, neither event happened in 2020, our Annual Fete was always extremely well attended and popular whilst another eagerly awaited event was the annual fair for Mistertonians to show off their produce and their skills. Some sixty years ago, Misterton WI purchased its own hall where it has led a very active life. This hall is useful for the smaller social and fund-raising events where the village hall is too large. There are three public houses in the parish of which one does food and drink, one drink only and the other has a semi-retired proprietor landlord and opens occasionally or for some private event. Near to the station, there is a café which also supplies sandwiches etc. to take away and proves very popular. Although the garage does sell a very limited range of essentials such as milk and bread, we have no other shop now in Misterton.

On the last weekend in August in every odd-numbered year, a Flower Festival is held in St. Leonard's Church and, although free in itself, with donations, teas and light meals, raffle and other stalls, provides a welcome attraction to the church as well as a source of additional funds.

### **North Perrott**

North Perrott lies on the Somerset/Dorset border about 2 miles south-east of Crewkerne, 1.5 miles south of the A30 connecting Crewkerne to Yeovil. Its name is derived from the River Parrett which runs nearby, and the parish covers about 1,280 acres. This is a small village, lying on the A3066 Yeovil – Bridport road and consists of about 300 people. It was once within the manorial ownership of the Hoskyns family and many of the family still live and work here. Many of the older buildings are built from the local honey coloured ham stone and much of the village lies within a conservation area. In addition to St Martin's Church the village has a farm shop and a garden centre, a large fruit farm, a thriving cricket club, Perrott Hill Preparatory School, an active village hall and a village pub – The Manor Arms. Agriculture is still the mainstay of the village, including the North Perrott Fruit Farm and several large dairy and other mixed farms and smallholdings. There is also a horse livery stable on the edge of the village. A small business area is situated in a group of converted farm buildings within the village. The resident population tends to be middle aged or elderly with relatively few children under the age of 18, partly due to a lack of social housing within the village. North Perrott lies within striking distance of the seaside and the Jurassic Coast.



**Alison Stevens** Church  
Warden

The village hall is an important part of the village and is the venue for events for the church such as the annual Harvest Supper, talks and presentations. There are also various group activities which

take place in the village hall such as the Garden Club, Pilates, badminton, etc and many other events are held in the village hall which adds to the community spirit.

Close relations are also maintained with the thriving and highly achieving North Perrott Cricket Club whose ground lies adjacent to the church. The Village Summer Fete is held jointly by both organisations at the ground and the church is also closely involved with the Parrett Challenge, a fun-filled day of games and competitions which take place at the ground on August Bank Holiday Monday.

There are close links with Perrott Hill School whose children regularly visit the church and hold concerts and services in the building. Reciprocally, the school has opened its doors to host some of the church's fund-raising events.

### **The Incumbent Associate Priest.**

I came to the Benefice of Wulfric at the very beginning; the three village parishes of Haselbury, Misterton and North Perrott had joined with Crewkerne, Hewish and Wayford. The move was pragmatic to establish a clergy presence in the villages after some years of relative instability. The post was divided having a particular responsibility for the 3 villages (50%) with the remainder of the post deployed across the Benefice. There was no great drive to unite the Benefice; rather to come together where possible for an annual Benefice service, to begin and end Lent together and share materials for Lent and Advent study groups. Clergy used to swap between the villages and the town on a quarterly basis to enable us to get to know respective congregations.

In terms of my post, and the Benefice we agreed that I would prepare materials for Lent and Advent; I would organise / deliver courses over agreed priorities (e.g., pastoral visiting, stepping stones); and develop other initiatives; e.g. working with others to develop and start Messy Church. I was also chaplain at Crewkerne community hospital for some 7/8 years prior to the post Saville reorganization when the post went in house. I also went to the Care Homes at Orchard's / Bowhayes on a monthly basis and where necessary outside of that.

Occasional offices were also shared, reflecting the greater demand coming from Crewkerne. In terms of my post, I found the balance worked well combining both rural ministry and having wider responsibilities across the Benefice and the Diocese.

Within the Benefice there are 4 first schools, a middle school and a secondary school. There is also a private prep school in one of the villages. All the first schools and the secondary school are Church of England Voluntary Controlled schools. The Churches have strong links with the schools in terms of governance, leading collective worship and joining in the life of the school in various ways – running a gardening club, accompanying children with reading etc. The schools are however reorganising from a 3 tier system to 2 tier and this will have an impact over the coming years, especially as Misterton school may well close. The prep school too has a close link with the village and the Church, particularly around major festivals.

The Churches have played an important part (in the Benefice / Deanery) in helping develop and sustain a chaplaincy (p/t) at Wadham, the secondary school. This has now been running for some 9



Rev'd Jonathan Morris

years and has always been seen as part of the local Churches missionary giving – enabling a clear Christian presence, working with an age cohort who do not regularly flow through our doors.

This Chaplaincy project has been ecumenical since the beginning and is supported by Crewkerne Churches Together which has as members Baptists, Methodists, Roman Catholics, Anglicans and Crewkerne Community Church (part of the Elim Pentecostal network). It was members of Crewkerne Churches Together that started Messy Church in the town and the network of volunteers is drawn from a number of Churches.

All the village Churches have a long history in their communities and are served by small but faithful congregations. The congregations are predominantly elderly. Many are active in their communities and there are people who take on roles both within the Church and beyond, particularly around visiting, fundraising and caring for the fabric of the Church. The Churches are supported and appreciated by people in the villages (which translates into support for fundraising, cleaning, flower arranging, attending concerts, churchyard clearing etc) and all attract a wider congregation at the time of Festivals – Christmas Easter Harvest and Remembrance for example. Special occasions like carol services, special evensong or services in the orchard also attract wider support. All of that is good and any new incumbent will find a small group of willing people with whom to work.

All the villages face challenges in governance though, thinking in terms of active engaged participation in the running of the Church. Succession planning of key officers (Treasurer, Church warden, secretary) is a big issue. All the Churches are vulnerable financially, which has been exacerbated by the pandemic with the cancellation of fundraising activities and two villages have reduced their Parish share contribution by half – temporarily at least. Added to this the ongoing challenges of maintaining the fabric of complex listed buildings means that much of people's energies is geared towards keeping the roof on (metaphorically, although literally right now for Haselbury), rather than anything else.

The villages struggle to get new people, particularly families / children etc. which is not just a local problem but is society wide and for all sorts of different reasons. Again, the profiles acknowledge this but I wonder how readily there would be a willingness to look at possible ways forward. Worship is traditional and probably not desperately appealing to people unfamiliar with Anglican traditions. That tension between the desire to keep the show on the road and the necessity of finding new ways is something a new incumbent will face.

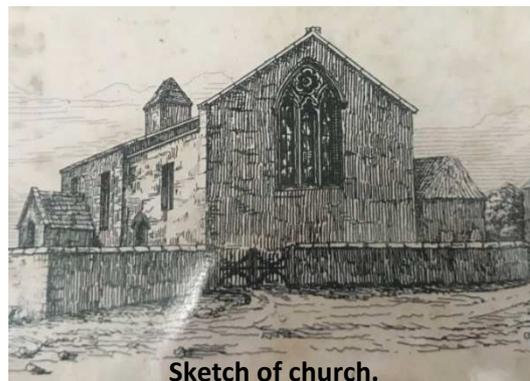
The Benefice has potential to thrive – a range of villages and a small market town, Church schools, a small hospital, with tremendous scope for engagement and varying degrees of participation in the life of the communities where the Church serves. All the villages are unique in their own ways, each with their own histories but they have in common people who are committed, faithful and hospitable and who work hard to maintain the beautiful Churches in the Benefice. That provides a sure foundation for a new incumbent, but for it to work, it will need creative and imaginative leadership, good team work skills and a desire to work with people rather than trying to generate a one size fits all organisation.

## Our Churches

### Wayford

**St Michael and All Angels.** This church dates back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century and the octagonal font is thought to be 14<sup>th</sup> century. In the fine wooden turret, originally painted white, hang two bells. The church was restored at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. At the same time, it was also enlarged by the addition of the north aisle. It still retains its box pews and can seat about 100.

The first incumbent was John de Offale, Rector in 1339. The Vicar of Crewkerne became Rector of Wayford in 1971.



Sketch of church.

There is a small church yard which is now closed and maintained by the South Somerset District Council. The first recorded burial there was in 1718.

### Haselbury Plucknett.

**St Michael and all Angels.** The parish church has stood on the present site at least since the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The tower is thought to date to the 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> centuries and parts of the chancel may be Early English but the present nave, built in the local hamstone, is the result of substantial alterations in the 1830s. In the 1980s parishioners designed and made a set of striking windows for the north wall and in the 1990s a West Gallery was reinstated. There is a meeting room below the gallery together with a small kitchen and WCs with disabled access. The meeting room can be reintegrated with the nave for additional seating by sliding back a wooden screen. The church has good disabled access and an audio system with hearing loop. We currently have pews for approximately 100 worshippers, but as hinted at above, that could be changed.



A 'cell' on the site of the present vestry was home to the anchorite priest Wulfric from 1125 to his death in 1154. Although this holy man was never formally canonised, in his lifetime he was revered throughout England and his cell remained a pilgrimage site until the Reformation. His remarkable life has been recorded by John of Forde and we were pleased to name the Benefice in his honour.



St Michael's Churchyard,  
Wildflower meadow

The churchyard of approximately 1.75 acres is still open for burials and internment of ashes. There is also a glebe field nearby of approximately 1.5 acres that is currently let out to the community orchard project and part of it is a nature area with trees planted and a noninterventionist plan. The churchyard is home to a planted wildflower mini meadow; plus bug hotels and bird boxes installed around the perimeter. An Eco Church award is being sought by the PCC in 2021/22. There is also a website for the church at [www.haselburystm.org](http://www.haselburystm.org) and a Facebook page "Haselbury Plucknett Parish Church".

**Bible Christian Centre.** There is a lively non-conformist organisation in Haselbury Plucknett, which draws on a large catchment area, worships in a charismatic and evangelical style on a well-appointed, purpose built, site. They also provide imaginative pastoral and youth work, and regularly share the Women's World Day of Prayer with St Michael's.

### **Misterton**

**St Leonard's.** The name "Misterton" means "the fence or enclosure around the monastery or church". It first appeared in the Pipe Rolls of 1199 and the (now) secular buildings adjacent to St. Leonard's church to the north and west date from that time and are indicative of a monastic foundation. The church itself seems to have been dedicated to St. Leonard in about 1520 and became the parish church at the Reformation some twenty years later. The current building dates from 1842 and is in good condition with only very minor matters being raised at the last Quinquennial in September 2018. St. Leonard's is unusual in having a balcony: this is across the western end and it contains the organ. The most notable alterations to the church since it was built are the additions of a small vestry; lighting; and heating. The Churchyard remains open although there are only a very limited number of spaces left.

St. Leonard's church is situated in Church Lane which is a cul-de-sac ending in farm land at the western end of the village. Parking is in the road and is limited. The church and churchyard are surrounded on all sides by neighbours' land which has to be crossed to get to and from the church land. The church lacks both toilet and kitchen and the absence of the former can be a problem at times. Ways of resolving this have been considered by the PCC every few years for quite a time but the solution yet eludes us.

**The Baptist Church** There was a chapel in Middle Street but the decision was made around 2016 to close that building and to concentrate worship in Crewkerne. The Chapel has now been sold. There are no other churches in the parish.

### **North Perrott**

**St Martin's Church** is a grade 1 listed building which is believed to date from Saxon times. The central tower is Norman but the main cruciform body of the church dates from the 1500s and is considered to be a good example of Perpendicular architecture.



St Martin's Church is located down a side lane and some distance from the village centre. It was subject to repeated thefts



and lost most of its lead roof to thieves during 2011-2012. However, thanks to generous funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, English Heritage, The National Churches Trust, The Somerset Churches and other organisations and also to the unceasing fundraising efforts of those in the village, both adults and children, including those of Perrott Hill School, the necessary amount was raised to replace the lead in the roof with terne coated stainless steel. This has no value to thieves. This is an outstanding example of the community working together to achieve a common goal.

Although the building itself precludes alteration to incorporate a church hall or extensions which could facilitate other activities, permission has been obtained and some monies raised to add a refreshment area and toilets. Plans for these are currently on hold due to the current situation of the coronavirus pandemic, which is also preventing the final internal repairs and redecoration of the interior walls of the church being concluded.



The church has its own website – [www.northperrottchurch.co.uk](http://www.northperrottchurch.co.uk)

## Our Worshipping Community

Pre COVID a summary of our populations and regular service schedule are shown in the two tables below:

	Pop'n	Electoral Roll	Members	Avg attendance	Parish share paid in full
<b>Misterton</b>	1250	32		22	TBC
<b>North Perrott</b>	286	30		13	Yes (reduced in 2020)
<b>Haselbury Plucknett</b>	726	40	35	24	Yes (reduced in 2021)
<b>Wayford</b>	114	23	12	9	Yes

	1 <sup>st</sup> Sun	Wed	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sun	Wed	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sun	Wed	4 <sup>th</sup> Sun	Wed	5 <sup>th</sup> Sun
<b>Crewkerne.</b> St Bartholomew's.	8.30am HC, BCP 10.00am HC, CW	10.30am HC, BCP	10.00am Joint Benefice Service						
<b>Hewish.</b> Church of the Good Shepherd.	11.45am HC				11.45am HC				
<b>Wayford.</b> St Michael & All Angels.	10.00am HC				10.00am HC				
<b>Haselbury.</b> St Michael & All Angels.			8.00am HC, BCP 10.00am Family		11.00am HC		11.00am HC		
<b>Misterton.</b> St Leonard's.			11.00am HC, BCP		9.30am HC		8.00am HC, BCP		
<b>North Perrott.</b> St Martin's.	10.00 HC		9.30am HC				9.30am HC		

**Wayford.** There are 23 names on the current Electoral Roll and an estimated regular membership of 12 with a significant number coming from Clapton There is an average attendance of about 8 at the regular services but this increases for festivals and special services with the most popular being the Carol Service In 2020 there was one baptism and two weddings are scheduled for 2021.



**After Service coffee and a chat.**

A service of Holy Communion is held on the first and third Sundays of each month. At most services we are fortunate to have a local organist to accompany the hymns. Until recently, the services were mainly taken by Lay Readers but following their retirement, we have had to rely on retired clergy in the Benefice and the wider Deanery.

The church is normally left unlocked so that passers by and villagers alike can call in for a few minutes of rest, peace and private prayer.

A Harvest Festival and a Carol Service are held, usually at 5pm. A Remembrance Service and Midnight Eucharist on Christmas Eve are also held.

We were fortunate in 2020 that we only missed one Festival Service, that on Easter Sunday. Harvest Festival was held as normal but the subsequent Harvest Supper and Auction of Produce had to be cancelled. Our Remembrance Service was restricted to a short Act of Remembrance around the War Memorial in the Church Yard. We also held our Carol Service outside on a beautiful clear evening so that we could all join in the singing. Christmas Midnight Eucharist was also blessed with a beautiful night.



**Some of the congregation on a nice, sunny day.**

Wayford PCC has seven members and meets four times a year.

**Haselbury Plucknett.** We have an Electoral Roll of 40, church membership is 35. The congregation is predominantly older middle class, with a marked absence of people under 40. All but 2 regular worshippers live in the village. Average attendance at our Common Worship Holy Communion services is around 24. An 8 am BCP Holy Communion has a small loyal following. Harvest Festival and Mothering Sunday as well as the Christmas services attract larger numbers, thanks partly to the fact that we encourage children to take an active part in the worship. Although there is no Sunday School, a member of the congregation regularly brings a couple of children, who are encouraged to complete worksheets appropriate to the Sunday's theme. For the occasional special afternoon Taizé worship or Choral Evensong we attract people from further afield. St Michael's sees perhaps 6 or 8 funeral services per year, roughly half of these being cremations. With the greater variety of wedding venues available these days, the number of wedding services has declined to 2 or



3. There are also about 3 baptisms annually.

While public worship had to be suspended during the pandemic, our clergy have used social media and other imaginative ways of keeping our faith nurtured. We are learning to make use of the many online offerings. Within the framework of Crewkerne Churches Together we support the Yeovil food bank Lords Larder.

Before the pandemic there were regular lent courses, the occasional other study groups and a small house group. A small Silent Prayer Group which used to meet every Friday lunchtime, still continues with members setting aside a fixed prayer time in their own homes. Parishioners also maintain a Lectio Divina group with friends from a neighbouring parish.

A local folk club named after St Wulfric have been active since 2019 and have held concerts in the Church both real and virtual, this is set to continue after lockdown restrictions and has the potential to raise income for the church. The virtual recordings have also been popular with artists who've commented on the excellent acoustics and organ sound.



**Misterton.** We have regular services, every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in the month. There were two funerals, one wedding but no baptisms held at St. Leonard's in 2020.

Prior to the arrival of COVID, we had lay teams of Servers, Intercessors, and Readers plus Sidesmen. With the exception of some Readers who have continued when we have held services, all others have effectively been furloughed. All this will be reviewed as and when we come out of the current crises. As and when the church has been open, cleaning has continued as normal. We are particularly blessed by a small army of extremely capable and talented flower-arrangers. Our PCC has seven lay members at the present time but it lacks a PCC Secretary and our Treasurer will be standing down at the APCM in late April after some thirty years in post. Our sole churchwarden, after eight years in office and with increasingly poor eyesight, will not stand for re-election this April.



Up until last year, the PCC met quarterly although it is felt that three times should suffice. It has not met since January 2020.

**North Perrott.** The church has an electoral role of 30, with a regular attendance of about 13. Services on the first Sunday in the month are hosted alternately by Haselbury, Misterton and North Perrott and also on the occasional 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday. Services are held regularly in St Martin's on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays. Families and children are particularly involved at Christmas with a nativity play and carol service with children from Haselbury also taking part. The children and families from both villages also take an active part in Mothering Sunday, Easter and at the Harvest Festival. There is also

a “Flower Group” that keeps the church beautifully decorated with floral displays on special occasions and ensures that the church is decorated for Sunday services.

We hold an Annual Lent Lunch for a special cause, such as Mothers and Children in the Yemen or The Urban Fund. We also support the Save the Children Fund and the Earl Haig



Fund. Large amounts of food are given to ‘The Lord’s Larder’ in Yeovil after the harvest festival, much of which is donated



children from North Perrott School.

10 members on the PCC, including the Churchwarden, Hon. Treasurer and Hon. Secretary. Volunteers from the Church and the community include the flower arranging group; the church cleaning group; a handy man; an organiser for the extension of the churchyard; a bonfire tender and general helper; 2 fundraising organisers with numerous assistants; a voluntary computer expert for publicity; visiting and help from a retired State Registered nurse; contact with elderly members of the community is maintained by all members of the congregation. A group of willing pupils from Perrott Hill School come about once a term to help to tidy up the churchyard.

We like to encourage all those who have special talents to join us in helping in their own way to cherish our village church and to feel welcome in doing so.

## Our Finances

- Full accounts can be made available to applicants on request
- All churches were paying their parish share in full until the pandemic, a number then moved to paying 0.5 or less and some have moved back to paying in full
- Each church has a dedicated treasurer (except for a vacancy at Misterton)
- Where issues are identified the PCCs have been proactive in fundraising or identifying new solutions
- There have been several projects which have been delivered by the churches with limited external support
- Where we have completed projects we have benefitted from local grants or gifting

**Wayford.** The accounts are efficiently maintained and are available for inspection. The recent quinquennial inspection (September, 2020) has shown the church to be in good condition only requiring minor maintenance other than replacement of the timber shakes on the belltower. The interior was redecorated in 2018 and the rainwater goods were also repainted. There is a reasonable, restricted Fabric Fund which was recently increased by a very generous



bequest.

The parish has found it challenging to meet its Parish Share contribution and other expenses through annual revenue but has always managed to meet its obligations in full. However, due to the pandemic, this may not be the case over the next few years.

In addition to the collections, the major sources of revenue are the Harvest Supper and Auction of Produce and providing teas at the Wayford Manor Open Gardens Day. The profit from both these is shared with Clapton and Wayford Village Hall. There is also a substantial, regular income from planned giving. The PCC is continually seeking new ways of fund raising.

The occasional concert and lecture have been held in the Church, but these occasions are restricted because of the lack of running water and sanitation.

**Haselbury Plucknett.** Despite a Planned Giving Scheme, we rely on fundraising to meet our financial obligations. To date we have always been able to pay quota and other parochial expenses in full, but it is a struggle to stay in the black. As far as capital expenditure goes, we can draw on a substantial legacy, the Beaumont Trust. This, however, will soon be exhausted. The congregation has regularly shown itself generous in supporting special collections, and events in aid of various charities. Harvest and Christmas collections are given away.

**Misterton** currently do not have a treasurer and are making ends meet but it's an ongoing struggle.

**North Perrott.** The weekly church collection is not enough to pay for the Parish share and all expenses, so we rely on fund-raising. We have always managed to fulfil the payment of additional expenses. However, this year this has not been possible, owing to the closure of the church due to the coronavirus pandemic. The Diocesan Finance Department has therefore allowed us to pay a reduced amount until we can resume services and fund-raising events, when we shall, of course, need to pay back the full amount.

Annual events, such as the Fete and 'The Parrett Challenge' – a Fun Day – are jointly run by the North Perrott Cricket club and take place at the Cricket Ground. This is a happy arrangement which works well and is well attended by the village. Further events are a biannual 'Gardens Open Day' and a Biannual Silent Auction, concerts and talks in the church and occasional coffee mornings. Sometimes a flower festival is staged by our very gifted flower arrangers. This year, special fund raising during the pandemic has been well supported by village members. I think that we all feel that our fund-raising efforts bring us all together and also enable people to make new friends and enjoy our Christian fellowship.

## **Our Village Schools**

**Haselbury Plucknett VC 1<sup>st</sup> School**

**Merriott First School**

**Haselbury Plucknett and Misterton Pre-School**

**Misterton CofE 1<sup>st</sup> School**

**North Perrott Prep-School**

Haselbury Plucknett VC 1st School, which is federated with Merriott First School, caters for about 50 children, while another 10 to 20 attend a pre-school on the premises. They are drawn from the village and surrounding area. It has a good Christian ethos and strong links with St Michaels. The

Associate Priest, who holds regular assemblies, and another member of the congregation are school governors. Regular school services and the Christmas play are held in church.

Misterton Church of England First School is likely to close in July 2022 as a result of recent local government decisions (this decision may be subject to review or judicial process). The school is nearly half-a-mile away from the church, at the other end of the village. Each journey between the school and the church involves crossing the main A356 road twice and walking on a narrow footpath alongside it for most of the way. Normally, the school attends two services at the church each term and, additionally, has held their Nativity Play in the church in more recent years. With a maximum capacity of 60, the current number at the school is 42 and, of those, the vast majority live outside the village. Pre-COVID, our Vicar attended the school at least weekly for school assemblies and worked closely with the Headteacher. It is a popular school, working in conjunction with the other two C of E schools in Crewkerne (St. Bartholomew's and Ashlands).

**Perrott Hill School** is an independent day and boarding prep school for girls and boys aged 3-13 located on a stunningly beautiful estate just outside Crewkerne, on the borders of Somerset and Dorset.

St Martin's, North Perrott plays an important role in the life of children at Perrott Hill both in the Pre-Prep and in the Prep school. It is not only a place of worship and the resting place of our founding Headmaster but a venue for music making and extra-curricular activities.



Over the years, St Martin's has hosted our Harvest

Festival, Remembrance and Passiontide Services. Despite the restrictions imposed by the pandemic, we were still able to film much of the singing and instrumental music of our recent Carol service at the church. St Martin's also features prominently in our website's promotional video, the accompanying soundtrack to which was filmed in the church. The close links that we enjoy with St Martin's and its parishioners are mutually supportive; in return for

using St Martin's, the school has engaged in fund raising activities in aid of the church roof and Reverend Morris is one of our team of school listeners. In the Autumn term a task force visits the church as part of our Community Action morning. As Deputy Head, I liaise closely with St Martin's Church Warden, Alison Stevens, who has worked tirelessly to facilitate the services we hold at the church and the rehearsals that precede them. Last year we ran a bell ringing activity at the church run by the Education Officer of the Bath and Wells Association of Bell Ringers.

We cherish the links we have with St Martin's and the role that it plays in the spiritual life of our children.

Mr Will Silk – Deputy Headmaster Perrott Hill School

## Opportunities for Development and Challenges

**Wayford** experiences problems typical of a small village church - small congregations and limited resources - but the church wardens and the PCC are trying to encourage wider participation. Over recent years, we have invited the young children and their parents to help decorate the Christmas Tree and create Easter Gardens.

They are determined, if at all possible, to continue the current pattern of services but possibly introducing some Family Services. However, the PCC recognises this may not be possible in its current form in the future and it may be necessary to share more worship with other congregations in the Benefice



**Village children preparing Easter Gardens.**

**Haselbury Plucknett.** The COVID crisis has prompted us to give serious consideration to the future life of our church. Having had to suspend the “normal routine”, we are beginning to feel our way forward towards a possible re-ordering of the church building to make it available for community use. And we are hoping to explore new ways of nurturing the life of faith for existing church members as well as others who may be searching for answers to some of the big questions that have surfaced during this crisis. We will be reducing to one churchwarden in April with no obvious replacement and our treasurer is looking for a replacement.

**Misterton.** The Churchwarden will be retiring soon with no obvious replacement.

**North Perrott.** Despite the financial challenges facing it, the church continued to pay its Parish Share until the current situation severely impacted on its fundraising activities and church collections.

And finally, the local folk club has also recorded a song about Wulfric <https://youtu.be/C2PQpLmr-gc>.

22/3/2021