

DIOCESE OF WINCHESTER
(Romsey Deanery)
PARISH OF SOMBORNE WITH ASHLEY
PARISH PROFILE

Who we are

The Parish Church (SS Peter & Paul) is a welcoming, well kept church, dating from the 13C, located in the centre of King's Somborne and is open throughout the day to provide a friendly and spiritual space.

Within the Parish, which has the largest area of any within the Diocese, there are two "redundant" Churches – All Saints, Little Somborne and St .Mary's Ashley. These are now the responsibility of the Churches Conservation Trust but maintained by parishioners.

We are inclusive and ecumenical, and members are heavily involved with the wider community, the excellent Church controlled school and vibrant village organisations. Currently however we share few activities with other neighbouring Churches.

Who we want to be

A church that serves and spreads the Good News to all the members of the community, especially the unchurched and disadvantaged A church for families and young people whilst retaining the strengths of our current congregation.

When our Vicar retires in 2012 we will join with the neighbouring Benefice of Stockbridge, Longstock and Leckford, to form an enlarged Benefice in the mid-Test valley. We are interested in the appointment of a spiritual parish priest with good teaching and team leading skills who will work with our present Vicar to manage and facilitate the creation of the joint benefice, and on his retirement to lead it.

The Parish

The Parish has about 1850 inhabitants of the 7500 acre area and is located in the southern half of the Test Valley on the A3057, which links Andover to Romsey.

It includes the large village of King's Somborne and several hamlets, including Ashley, Up Somborne, Little Somborne and Horsebridge and stretches from Brook in the south to Sandydown in the north. It is 3 miles from Stockbridge. There is limited public transport to our local towns of Winchester, Andover and Salisbury,.

There is a wide range of people of all ages and occupations, living in a mixture of council built and privately developed, privately owned or rented housing. Much of the land in and around the Parish is farmland, but few people work on the land;: most commute or work from home.

There are two general stores in King's Somborne- one a combined Post Office and general business offering a broad range of products and services such as dry cleaning and another grocer's shop which offers a much appreciated home delivery service. There are two pubs, one in the centre of the village and one in the hamlet of Horsebridge. There is also an active Working Men's Club, a Village Hall used by many village organisations (and in process of re-furbishment), and Recreation and Sports fields.

The nearest Surgery is located in Stockbridge and prescriptions may be delivered to the Post Office. There is a voluntary

Neighbourcare scheme for those who do not have their own transport to take them to the surgery or to the hospitals in Winchester, Andover or Southampton.



King's Somborne has what the most recent Ofsted report described as 'An outstanding Church of England School' and the Head teacher is justifiably proud of the education that is provided for the 102 children. There is a very active two-way link between the Church and the School. Every Monday, worship is led by the Vicar, Reader or by the Methodist minister. Major festivals are celebrated in the church and shared by parents, family and friends. Some assemblies are also held in the Church and the school uses the Church for other activities. The Vicar and two members of the congregation serve as Foundation Governors. There is a School House Trust, the interest from which can be used for the benefit of the school. The Vicar and Churchwardens are Trustees.



It is likely that a new pre-school will shortly be set up to provide for many youngsters whose families reside in the village and have no transport and who would benefit from local nursery education. The parish is in the catchment area for Test Valley Comprehensive in Stockbridge although some pupils opt for private or state schools elsewhere.

There is a great opportunity to build on this work with young people and increase our outreach to the wider community.

The Churches

The church is Grade 2+ listed, dates from 1240 and was extensively renovated in Victorian times. Points of interest include 12C font, 12C graffiti, 13C brasses, a window in memory of Sir Thomas Sopwith and beautiful embroidery, undertaken by the Somborne Needleworkers, including a wedding roll and curtains depicting St. Peter and St. Paul. The six bells were re-hung in 2001. The building is in generally good repair. There is a loop system in place for the hard of hearing and portable ramps are available for the use of the disabled.



The church has no other buildings, and the closed Churchyard is maintained by the Parish Council.

There are two other churches in the parish, at Ashley (St. Mary's) and Little Somborne (All Saints), and both are within the care of the Churches' Conservation Trust which maintains the fabric of the building and are the centre for social and spiritual activities within the two hamlets.

There is a Methodist Chapel, with whom we signed a covenant forming the basis for Christians Together in the Sombornes and Ashley (CTIS) which now holds a number of ecumenical services, Lent course, Home and prayer groups and social events such as a Drop in Club and annual local walk. There is a hall attached and is used on a regular basis by the Parish Church for PCC meetings. There are restrictions for social events as no alcohol is allowed on the premises.

Young Christians Together in Somborne are actively involved in encouraging the young:

Tiny Tots: Meet in the Parish Church each Tuesday during term time at 9.15am . Sessions are based on bible stories, the seasons and thanking God. and are involved in Family services.

Sunday School (FUN – for the under nines): Held in the School Hall at 10.00am on Sundays and join the Parish Church towards the end of morning service for a blessing and to show the congregation what they have been learning about. Sunday School sessions follow the Church year and these are taught through stories, acting, songs, games, craft and prayer. Sunday School regularly takes part in Church Services both at special festivals such as Harvest, Mothering Sunday and Christmas,



through the Nativity Play, but also take part in the monthly Family Services when the children confidently read prayers etc.

SNAS (Sunday Night at Six) : For 9 to 11 year olds that meets in the Epworth Hall at 6.30pm on Sunday evenings twice a month. The group is led by a member of the Methodist Church and a Methodist Youth Leader, and has been very successful in providing a Christian outlook to young teenagers. The group joins the Alive Service on the last Sunday of the month.

Youth Group: In order to continue to challenge and engage our older members, a monthly youth house group for children of secondary school age has been set up and they meet in each other's homes and organise their own group under the guidance of an adult.

The Church has a Vicar (PIC), Reader, two Churchwardens and a PCC of 15 (including 3 Deanery Synod members). We are lucky to have 3 volunteer organists and a voluntary Sacristan as well as members who repair and enhance the embroidery of the Church (Somborne Needleworkers), clean, provide flowers and deal with general Church needs and housekeeping.

In an effort to cater for all tastes regular services are a mixture of traditional BCP and Common Worship formats and one monthly all age service of worship and praise. Dedicated service sheets are normally used and refreshments provided after the services. According to service, average congregations vary between 5 and 30 although at major Festivals and other special services there may be around 120. Electoral Roll numbers in 2008 were 122.

Church services every Sunday:

- 8.00am Communion B.C.P. 10-15 Age 50+
- 10.00 am 2nd Sunday – Family Service – All ages
Informal service for all ages followed by refreshments
- 10.00 am Other Sundays
Holy Communion Age 35+
Common worship with hymns and sermon followed by refreshments
Sunday school attend last 10 minutes and inform congregation of their morning's activities.
- 10.00 am Last Sunday in the month Age 45+
Matins B.C.P. followed by short Holy Communion
- 6.00 pm Last Sunday in the month
Alive Service – alternative evening service with music group. All ages

Special services held throughout the year include the Patronal Festival, principal Holy Days, Education Sunday and Baptism Anniversary, Remembrance (both Sunday and the 11th November) when the school participate.

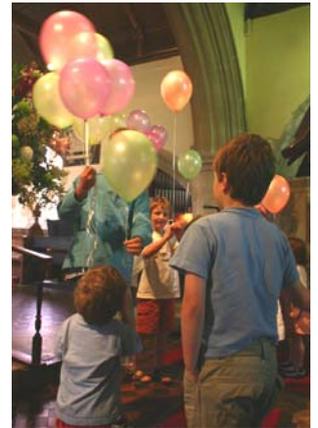
These are also attended by the Somborne Cubs, Scouts and Beavers.

There is a strong emphasis on ecumenical work with the young in the parish, with more young families coming into the village. There are great opportunities ahead to build on the youth involvement. Recently a few of the laity have attended a course to implement a 'Pastoral Group' to assist the present vicar in this aspect of village life. In the coming months 'The Friends of The Parish Church' will come into effect. There is already a 'Friends of Ashley' which is very successful.

In 2008 there were 8 weddings, 8 baptisms, 8 funerals and 1 memorial service in the Parish Church. Cremations were also held by the Vicar at Basingstoke, Salisbury and Southampton.

There is no official choir but a group of singers (Somborne Singers) practise in the church and sing at festival occasions including Christmas and Easter and at weddings and other times if requested. Re-started for the Millennium a team of bellringers complement the music of the Church.

There is a very active group of ladies, the Somborne Needleworkers, who meet on Thursday afternoons and make



and repair vestments, kneelers etc. Their work is highly commended by all visitors to the church, and is regularly exhibited at festivals in the church.



At the “redundant” Churches of Ashley and Little Somborne special permission has to be granted by the Bishop for baptisms, funerals and weddings. Several services, including Rogation and Harvest, are held at both Ashley and at Little Somborne by agreement with the Bishop and the Churches’ Conservation Trust, which are conducted by the vicar, and the collections from these services benefit the mother Church in King’s Somborne and the CCT.

The Parish magazine (The Gauntlet) is organised by the ‘church’ under the guidance of a management team and is self funded by the advertising revenue. Over 100 volunteers are involved each year in the monthly production and distribution to every home in the Parish According to the Council sponsored Parish Plan it is a much appreciated vehicle for

communication within the Parish.

There is no paid secretarial support at present though there is a group of volunteers that assist in administrative support. There is a parish computer, printing machine and a photocopier currently housed and used by the Vicar and printers of the Parish magazine in the Parish Room at the Vicarage.

The Village

The Village is a thriving and lively community with varied clubs and organisations including the Somborne Society, Women’s Institute, Horticultural Society, Drama Group, Scouts and Sunshine Club. There are several sports clubs including Football, Cricket and Badminton. Future details and past reports for all these can usually be found in ‘The Gauntlet’.

Social and Fundraising events held by the Church such as the Skittles evening, Boules , Harvest Supper and Lunch, and Summer and Christmas Fairs are enjoyed and well supported by local people.

Finance

The 2007 Parish Share for the Parish of Somborne with Ashley was £34,132 of which we paid £31,700 (93%). For 2008 the Parish Share was set at £35,891, again of which we have paid 93%. Over the last couple of years we have suffered from falling weekly offerings and Gift Aid so much so that we set about and organised a Giving in Grace scheme in late 2007. This has proved to be very successful and our voluntary income has increased by almost 20% in 2009.

Our General Fund is made up of 65% voluntary income, 17% from fund-raising activities and the balance from wedding and funeral fees, dividends and interest and grants and bequests. We have a General Fund and five Restricted Funds which cover areas such as Fabric and the Church Organ. Within our General Fund we have designated monies and non-designated monies. The designated monies are for the running and maintaining of our Parish magazine, The Gauntlet.

The Church has for several years given 10% of its income to charity and this is distributed to local, national and international causes. Two of the international causes we support are South Rwenzori in Uganda and Kisiizi Hospital and School also in Uganda.

There is a School House Trust, the interest from which can be used for the benefit of the school. The Vicar and Churchwardens are Trustees.

Our last Quinquennial inspection took place in 2006 and all the recommendations have either been undertaken or are in hand.

The Vicarage

The Vicarage was acquired prior to the present incumbent arriving in 2002 and is located centrally in the village next to the main through road, close by the School and the Church. It is a modern four bedroom house, including

one en-suite. It is approximately 22 years old with the usual amenities of a fully equipped kitchen, utility room, lounge, dining room and study. It also has an additional room with adjoining shower/toilet which the current Vicar allows to be used as a parish room and contains the parish printer, copier, computer, etc.

The garden at the rear of the property is of a reasonable size and is enclosed. There is a double garage and adequate off road parking for a few cars. Additional parking is possible in the nearby Recreation Ground Car Park.



Christians Together Spring Walk



School Maypole Dancers at the Summer Fair



Confirmation candidates with Bishop Paul



School Band playing in Winchester Cathedral



'Christ is Risen' on Easter Sunday



Strong links between school and church



Christmas Cards on Sale at Christmas Fayre



Deanery Shoe Box Service at Parish Church