

BENEFICE OF HENFIELD WITH SHERMANBURY AND WOODMANCOTE



High Street in Henfield

PROFILE

INTRODUCTION

The Benefice

There are three parishes in the Benefice: Henfield (St Peter), Shermanbury (St Giles) and Woodmancote (St Peter). The Benefice was formed in the 1970s. It lies within the Deanery of Hurst, the Archdeaconry of Horsham and the Diocese of Chichester. The Patron, for the purpose of appointing a new Incumbent, is the Bishop of Chichester. As this Profile explains, there are several ways in which the parishes work together. However, their history and patterns of worship are quite distinct, and each has its own Parochial Church Council (PCC). There are no plans for closer integration, but the PCCs are open to exploring new ways of co-operative working and to building upon the positive relationships that exist currently.

The structure of this Profile

Because each parish is a legal entity, each PCC has prepared and agreed its own Profile. There are some topics which are common to all three, so these appear in a combined section at the end of this document.

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THE PARISH OF ST PETER, HENFIELD

PARISH PROFILE 2009

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 28th October 2009



What we are looking for in our new Vicar

The new Vicar will find in Henfield a church family aware of the need to be alive, and lively and responsive, in a changing world while remaining true to its Christian values and witness. He, or she, will need the resourcefulness and vision to take the Parish forward in worship and ministry within the church family and in its witness to, and concern for, the community as a whole. The PCC would therefore welcome a new Vicar who:

- ❖ Is a Parish priest of prayer, vision and practical spirituality with the ability to relate the Gospel to everyday situations; is equipped to lead church members to a more mature faith; and has an open and welcoming approach to those not yet committed;
- ❖ Regards the Eucharist and mission as central to what the church does and stands for;
- ❖ Is of central churchmanship – dedicated to parish and people, prepared to keep an open-minded approach, and is diplomatic and willing to listen;
- ❖ Embraces a progressive and open Theological approach;
- ❖ Is a strong supporter of the ordination of women to the priesthood;
- ❖ Supports and is prepared to take forward the parish's commitment to welcoming young people and families;
- ❖ will encourage and foster the participation of the laity in taking forward the church's organisation, mission and ministry; and is prepared to work constructively and collaboratively with the PCC;
- ❖ Is a sensitive and caring pastor for anyone in need of help and support, not only within the church family but in the wider community;
- ❖ Appreciates and supports the use of a wide variety of music in worship;
- ❖ Has a vision for the church's mission to the whole parish; is prepared to work closely with the Church-Aided Primary School and with the Roman Catholic and Free and Community Churches within the village; and is prepared to be part of the local community; and
- ❖ Ideally, is a priest with energy and compassion, and can display flexibility and imagination in spiritual leadership and worship within the Parish.

What we can offer to the new incumbent

The new Vicar will find at St Peter's a church family of all ages that is open, friendly and ready to share in ministry; a team of curates and retired priests able to share in the work of pastoral and spiritual leadership; plenty of opportunity for growth in numbers and faith; a tradition for ecumenism in witness and ministry; and a village with a strong sense of community.

The village

Henfield lies in the heart of the Sussex countryside midway between Horsham and Brighton. It has a population of about 6000, with the prospect of further development over the next few years. There is a good range of local shops and, being an ancient settlement, a mix of old and new housing and a network of footpaths (or twittens) and walks. There are two residential care homes and several sheltered housing schemes within the village, and reasonable provision of social housing.

What characterises life in the village more than anything else is its very strong sense of community and friendly atmosphere. There is a wide range of clubs and organisations, including a village Youth Club, amateur theatre company, Art Club, Garden Club, U3A group – indeed, around 50 clubs to cater for most activities and interests. There are also very strong and long-established scout and guide groups in Henfield. The Leisure Centre is large and well-equipped for a variety of sports, and The Henfield Hall has a large meeting room/auditorium, several small rooms and kitchen and is always a hub of activity for many of the village's organisations. There is a well-stocked Public Library.

Henfield has one school – St Peter's Primary School – which is church-aided. It has around 360 pupils and is an integral part of our Parish life. Over 1000 of the population are aged 19 and under, so there are plenty of young families.

St Peter's Church



The large Parish Church was built in the 13th Century and enlarged in the 14th and 15th Centuries, although it stands on the site of the first Christian church in Henfield dating back to 8th Century. It is centrally located so is relatively easily accessible on foot from much of the village. It is set in what is considered to be one of the finest churchyards in Sussex. This is now closed to further interments, so

interments all now take place in the Cemetery operated by the Parish Council. In 1871 a great restoration took place, under the direction of the architect who built the schools at Lancing, Hurstpierpoint and Ardingly. Canon Woodard, the schools' founder, lived in Henfield from 1862 to 1891.

In 2008 a major re-ordering and re-furbishment scheme was completed. This involved removal of the pews and provision of new chairs, new stone flooring with underfloor heating and new lighting. It now provides a very large and open space which has won admiration from far and wide. This allows for very flexible use in worship. The PCC also encourages its use for other activities such as musical and other performances. There have already been concerts and recitals, and the Henfield Theatre Company is performing *The Roses of Eyam* in and around the church in the summer of 2010. The church also contains the Parham Chapel – a side chapel for quiet devotion and prayer and occasional services. We believe that St Peter's should be seen as an integral and central part of the village life, not just for worship and witness but for fostering community spirit. There are eight bells in the church tower.

The church building is generally in a good state of repair. The 2009 Quinquennial Inspection identified work to gutters and other rainwater items, and attention to some gable ends and stonework, as requiring priority attention. These are the subject of Faculty proceedings, with the expectation of work on site early in 2010. The new incumbent should not therefore be faced with any major building concerns. The churchyard is mown by a contractor, who also mows the Vicarage lawns. Cleaning of the church is carried out by a team of volunteers, but there is a paid verger.

Other church properties

In addition to the Vicarage (see below), **Church House** opposite the church belongs to the parish and comprises a large hall, kitchen and WCs. It is widely used not only by the church but by a pre-school and other village organisations. There is a small committee which manages the building on behalf of the PCC.

Glebe House is a detached four-bedroom property, in the centre of the village, for the stipendiary assistant curate.

St Peter's people

There are currently 206 names on the church Electoral Roll, but we are delighted to welcome many others to services (such as Xplore – see below), either regularly or occasionally, who have not yet made that commitment to full membership of the church family. We aim always to be open, friendly and accessible, and there is a strong sense of being members of a joyful and loving church family. We are blessed with congregations of all ages, from the elderly to young families. There are rotas of lay people for readings and intercessions, and we have several Lay Ministers of Communion. The laity are committed to supporting and developing the work of the church, and to working in partnership with the clergy.

Social events such as shared lunches or dances are held from time to time in either the Church, the adjacent church hall or other venues including The Henfield Hall.

Pattern of services at St Peter's Henfield

Sunday

8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP 1 st , 3 rd and 5 th , CW 2 nd and 4 th Sundays)
10.00am	Non-Eucharistic All Age Worship (1 st Sunday) Parish Communion (2 nd Sunday) Xplore (3 rd Sunday) (see page 10) Parish Communion (4 th Sunday) Family Communion (5 th Sunday)
6.30pm	Evening Service (Either Evensong, Healing and Wholeness or, on 1 st Sunday, Holy Communion)

Monday and Tuesday

7.45am	Morning Prayer
5.45pm	Evening Prayer

Wednesday

7.45am	Morning Prayer
10.30am	Holy Communion followed by coffee
5.45pm	Evening Prayer

Thursday

7.45am	Morning Prayer
5.45pm	Evening Prayer
7.15pm	Holy Communion

Friday

7.45am	Morning Prayer
2.00pm	Little Fishes pre-school group
5.45pm	Evening Prayer

Saturday

8.30am	Morning Prayer
5.45pm	Evening Prayer

Communion is celebrated regularly at the two care homes in Henfield. There is a weekly ecumenical, non-Eucharistic service at each of them, arranged jointly with the other churches in the village.

Music

A wide range of music is featured in our services, including items from Iona and Taize. Mainly, we use *Hymns Old and New (Anglican Edition)* [green cover] and, when occasion demands, *100 Hymns for Today* and *Worship Songs*.

The church has a large two-manual digital computer organ of a quality, specification and amplification eminently suited both to accompaniment for services and to recitals. There is also a Challen grand pianoforte. St Peter's has a professionally qualified organist who also directs the small but committed adult choir. There is Choral Evensong on the third Sunday of each month. The Celebration Choir, which is inter-denominational, gathers annually in the church to prepare for a secular concert for the Christmas season in the Henfield Hall. Some members of this Choir also augment St Peter's Choir for festival services.

Ministry to families and young people



Holy Communion at Xplore

We regard this as an extremely important aspect of our life and witness as a church family. It is centred on Xplore (a Fresh Expression of Church act-of-worship), the principal service on the third Sunday of each month. Its purpose is to encourage children and families, with little or no connection with the Church, into the church family and a growing faith in Christ. Through a monthly service of creative worship, including a Eucharist, where people can 'play as they pray', it encourages them to explore God through creativity and to find their place within His family. Although it makes new links with the 'threatened and missing generations', it also appeals to teenagers and adults of all ages. Indeed, young people are involved in the planning and delivery of Xplore. Monthly numbers are anything between 80 and 120, with up to 40 under-16s.

On Fridays Little Fishes, primarily for carers and toddlers, meets in church. The Group With No Name, for children aged 10 and upwards, is a joint project with the other churches in Henfield. Since 2001 we have prepared children aged 7 and above to become part of the Communion Fellowship of the Church. In common with many other churches, we are anxious to develop ways of encouraging teenagers to feel that they have a place in the Lord's family.

Until recently we have been blessed with a part-time, licensed Parish Children's Worker, much of whose time has been taken up with promoting the faith in and around the Church-Aided school. The funding for this has now come to an end. The PCC is very keen to appoint a Youth Worker, and this will be a key priority in our budget planning. In the meantime our work with young people is being sustained by the curates and lay volunteers from the church family.

Nurturing the faith, Parish activities and outreach

We have house and prayer groups (including a Julian Group), and also teaching courses, Posada in Advent, Baptism follow-ups, pastoral visiting, groups and activities for young people, a walking group and other activities. There is a very active bell-ringing group who practice weekly, and the church has a ring of 8 bells widely regarded as one of the finest in Sussex. The PCC would like to see further development of the prayer life of the church, including an increase in the number of house and prayer groups. A prayer diary is used across the Benefice, and the weekly pew sheet is also common to all three churches. Each month there is a coffee morning in church for anyone in the village, providing refreshments and fellowship, and raising funds for the month's chosen charity.

A monthly Parish Magazine is published by the PCC for the three villages in the Benefice. The Editor is a member of the church family, and the magazine contains a wide variety of articles and information not just relating to the churches in the village but also to all village organisations and activities. It is funded largely through advertising.

We have continuing links with Christian projects in Uganda. We are open to exploring with the new incumbent overseas links with other churches or projects.

Ecumenical activities

The clergy from all four churches in the village (Anglican, Free Church, Roman Catholic and Community Church) meet together three or four times a year. The churches hold a number of ecumenical activities, including house groups during Lent and Advent, a Walk of Witness on Good Friday, the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Remembrance Sunday, Women's World Day of Prayer, Christian Aid, and HOPE (a week of social action, fellowship, fun and worship for people of all ages in the village). During the restoration project our Sunday and mid-week services were held in the other churches, the School and The Henfield Hall.

The PCC and Committees

The Henfield PCC is now a registered charity (no 1103458). We are very fortunate in having a PCC representing a wide cross-section of ages and interests, and a range of professional skills. It meets monthly (except in August), and meetings alternate between administration and mission/ministry. It is supported by various committees, comprising both PCC and other church family members, to carry out much of the detailed work and planning:

- Standing Committee
- Pastoral Care
- Baptismal Care
- Sharing our Faith
- Buildings and Finance
- Young People/Family Worship
- Stewardship
- Church House

Friends of St Peter's

The Friends was formed to reach out beyond the church family and encourage the local community to help ensure that St Peter's remains available for future generations. Its aims are therefore to raise funds, help to maintain a centre of worship, and ensure the provision of an asset for the use of the whole community. It has raised significant sums of money, which are invested in the Church Building Trust and available to the PCC for the upkeep and maintenance of the fabric.

Finance

The full report and accounts for 2008 can be seen on the Charity Commission website (no 1103458). We currently meet our Parish Contribution in full although, in common with most Parishes, we face challenging times ahead and we need to raise funds to appoint a Youth Worker. When circumstances permit, we would also like to be in a position to return to giving 10% of our income to charity.

THE PARISH OF ST GILES, SHERMANBURY

PARISH PROFILE 2009

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 4th November 2009



ST GILES, SHERMANBURY

St Giles is the most northerly of the three parishes that make up the benefice and is the most isolated. It is situated in the grounds of a private park the entrance of which is about 1.5 miles North of Henfield on the A281 Henfield to Horsham Road. The drive to the church is about half a mile long and is uneven, but useable.

The Parish of Shermanbury has a population of about 500 and the church is centred between the two halves of the parish, the western part being the hamlet of Shermanbury and the eastern half is the hamlet of Wineham. As can be gauged both are thinly populated and the focal point, apart from St Giles' church, is the Royal Oak Pub in Wineham.

What we would wish to see in our Rector

Whilst we support the criteria described in the profile for the Parish of Henfield we specifically would wish to see as our Rector someone who is:

- ❖ A Family person who is able to listen, communicate and show compassion and a genuine interest in all residents.
- ❖ Sympathetic with village and rural life.
- ❖ Broad church with the ability and willingness to embrace a diversity of worship styles, using the Book of Common Prayer, the Authorised version of 1611 (the King James Bible) and hymns from "Hymns Ancient and Modern" (all used at St Giles), while leading dignified services.
- ❖ Active and energetic enough to cope with the three churches, but balanced with enough experience to accommodate and appreciate the various differences between the churches.
- ❖ Able to preach in attractive and practical terms.
- ❖ Able to relate to children.
- ❖ An overt supporter of the ordination of women.
- ❖ A leader, with a sense of humour who is capable of encouraging and drawing out the talents of a mixed group of churchgoers and friends of the church.
- ❖ Capable of welcoming and encouraging younger generations into the church and maintaining their interest.

What we can offer the incumbent

- ❖ The opportunity to work in beautiful South Downs countryside.
- ❖ Two curates and a team of retired local clergy who are willing to assist with services on an occasional basis, which we share with the whole benefice.
- ❖ Similarly, the support of an Administrator based in St Peter's Church, Henfield and close to the Vicarage.
- ❖ The support and friendship of parishioners, including the Friends of St Giles who recognise the additional demands of non-parochial work.

The PCC aim to offer a church which is well-integrated and with strong beliefs, yet is easy to approach. Our overall aim over the next 5 years is to continue increasing the congregation so that the average attendance is 30, thus easing the pressures on a few and permitting our work to be enjoyed by more people in the Parish.

The Church and Parish in more detail

The Church is a small building and stands in Shermanbury Park, close to Shermanbury Place. Its situation often leads to the assumption that it is, or was, a private chapel to the adjoining house. There is no evidence this was ever the case although the entry in the Domesday Book evidently makes the church the property of the lord of the manor. However, by 1288 Shermanbury had its own rector. A church has existed on the site since Norman or earlier times and it is clear the park came later.

The first documented evidence of the Church occurs in the Domesday Book (1086) wherein it is described as a 'ecclesiola' (a little church). It is, therefore, Norman although it is highly probable that there was a church on this site in Saxon times.

The entire history of the place has been affected by the owners and occupants of two distinctive and ancient properties both within three hundred yards of each other. The first is Shermanbury Place, the second is Ewhurst Manor. The current Shermanbury Place was built by John Challen in 1785 upon the site of an ancient Elizabethan edifice of considerable dimensions. Ewhurst Manor traces its history from Norman times and the ancient gatehouse dates to the time of Edward 1st (1232-1307).

Returning to St Giles, the evidence that a Norman church stood upon the site is provided by the carvings discovered in 1901 which were inspected a few months later by Mr Philip Johnstone, a leading archeologist who advised they dated to 1135 or earlier. There are also two in situ medieval features in the South wall, a piscina and a recessed blocked arch. The piscina is of early 13th century type and both have the same broad pointed profile.

By 1700 the parish was afflicted by financial problems and internal strife and the church fell into dilapidated condition. During the early years of the 18th century considerable work was done, the nave was extended and the chancel added and beneath a painting of the coat of arms of Queen Anne, it records extensive repairs were carried out in 1710.

In 1747 the box pews were added and inscribed with the names of the surrounding houses and farmsteads. These are still there today. More work was done in the mid-19th century when the brick vestry was added to the chancel. In 1885 the church was once again restored and the roof was re-laid. This same roof now requires stripping off and re-laying and an application to English Heritage/Lottery was submitted in June 2009 for a grant.

The latest Quinquennial inspection took place in April 2009 and the resulting report focused on the need to strip off and relay the roof. The report stated "the church is in better condition than it looks and the internal cleaning maintenance is exemplary. The number of churchgoers attracted reflect a comparatively thriving and active church community". Structurally the church is in reasonable condition, inside and out. There are a number of repairs which should be undertaken within the next five years but there is little value in taking many of these forward until the roofs have been repaired.

An electronic digital organ was installed in 1997.



St Giles' internal view

The Parish

Until recent times the parish was predominantly concerned with agriculture and it is only over the last 30 years that this has receded. Small holdings have largely disappeared and the main farms have acquired the latter, but agriculture still forms a traditional and important background to the church.

The Electoral Roll, Services and Attendance

At the end of April 2009 the Electoral Roll stood at 50.

All services at St Giles commence at 11.15 a.m. and the following services, all from the Book of Common Prayer, are routinely held:

1st Sunday of the month – Mattins

3rd Sunday of the month – Holy Communion

5th Sunday of the month – Evensong at 5.30 p.m. (6.30 p.m. in summer time) or Holy Communion if a Festival or similar.

During 2008 the average attendance for Mattins and Holy Communion were 20 per service and 40 for the Festivals of Christmas, Easter and Harvest.

In addition there were 7 baptisms, weddings and funerals when an average attendance was 74. The attendances over the last four years have risen steadily each year.

The Friends of St Giles' Church, Shermanbury

In the period 2001-2003 attendances dropped off due to a number of circumstances, not least the difficulty in obtaining access to the park leading to the church and the church was perilously close to closure. Since then new arrangements regarding access have been made and a new vigour has restored the church to a healthy existence. At that time there was a growing awareness that the roof and other costly works were looming and at the end of 2007 a 'Friends of St Giles', was formed. Being faced with ever-increasing costs of repairing and maintaining the fabric there was a need to enable and encourage a wider group of people to help to share the burden of ensuring the church building is in a reasonable state to hand on to the next generation.

An additional aim was to build on the goodwill that people have towards their church although they may not wish to contribute to the purely religious aspects of the church.

A strong committee was formed and in the first 18 months of its existence the Friends have raised some £15,000 for the repair and maintenance of the fabric. The Friends activities range from running a large Country Fayre in the grounds adjoining the church in 2008 which made a profit of over £6,000 to a concert in the summer of 2009. Friends of St Giles have also formed and established a gift shop, which sells items including 'fridge magnets, stationery items, honeys and curds. The PCC also run fund-raising events and in August this year ran a 'Treasures of St Giles Exhibition', which raised £2000. The Friends produce a newsletter twice a year – June & December. At present there are some 72 members. Monthly cleaning sessions of the church interior take place routinely which is largely done by Friends who also undertake the maintenance work to the churchyard. The formation of the Friends movement has largely revitalised the church and has seen a significant number of people become involved in the non-pastoral side of church life but all are keen to maintain the little church and ensure it is passed on to the next generations in good condition. Currently the Friends are forming a group to make and provide tapestry seat cushions to the pews together with new kneelers. This is expected to be a long-term project that will run for a few years.

Finances

The Church is solvent and has always paid its diocesan and benefice contributions on time.

THE PARISH OF ST PETER, WOODMANCOTE

PARISH PROFILE 2009

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 29th October 2009



ST. PETER WOODMANCOTE

Parish Location and People

The Church is on the A281, Brighton Road, about two miles from Henfield, this is the southern boundary of the parish, which extends northwards to join Shermanbury. It consists of farmland and woodland.

The hamlet of Blackstone is roughly in the centre of the parish and the residents are mainly along the Brighton Road, in Blackstone and Bramlands Lane in the south, part of which is just inside the South Downs National Park Boundary.

There are about 350 electors, including approx. 30 people living in the large country house and bungalows known as Terry's Cross (on the A281 five minutes walk SE of the Church along a footpath) many of them retired church workers or clergy.

In April 2009 the Church Electoral Roll numbered 38 mainly middle aged or older.

Congregation:

Average attendances for the normal Sunday morning services is 23, (20 in winter) there are no children or young people in the regular congregation, which includes 10 or so who live in Henfield but have had previous connections with Woodmancote or prefer a smaller church with a quieter service. The congregation is loyal, although some are physically frail.

In the other direction, some Woodmancote residents attend St Peter's Henfield services, particularly those with children.

Services:

Our regular Sunday Services are:

1st. 3rd. & 5th. Sundays - H.C. Based on C.W. - 4 Hymns

2nd. & 4th. Sundays - Matins - BCP - 4 Hymns

The above may change for special Services - Christmas, Easter etc.

There are Combined Benefice Services on occasions.

In addition to The Rector we have had services taken by: Revd Christina Bennett, Revd Angela Martin, Revd Desmond Lockyer, Revd Ann McNeil, Revd Keith McRae, and Lay Reader Fred Cook, all of whom have been welcomed and appreciated.

There is a small Choir (not robed) and music is led by our organist, John Gardiner, whose playing we look forward to before and after the services. Hymns are from Common Praise and are chosen by the Choir Leader.

There is a rota of Readers, who choose their own translations and at H.C. we do not exchange 'The Peace' with each other. There is always a large print Order of Service on the Altar. There is a Loop System in place.

Coffee and biscuits are always served after services, giving the congregation an opportunity of speaking with friends, visitors and the clergy.

The pews hold 80 worshippers comfortably, increasing to 100 or more for weddings and funerals.

Church Building and Churchyard:

St. Peter's was built in the 13th – 14th Century and was extensively rebuilt in 1868-70 using much of the original material, the exterior is flint with stone dressings and adding a wooden spire. The spire was re-shingled when the roof received major repairs around 2000, when an English Heritage Grant was received towards the exterior work. It is listed Grade 2* the next Q.I. is due in 2010.

A generous legacy was received from a parishioner which enabled a flint extension to be added on the north wall in 2008/9 to provide a small kitchen and a toilet suitable for disabled users. The lighting and heating was also updated then.

The churchyard is open, both for burials and the interment of ashes. A new Garden of Remembrance is in the planning stage, together with a memorial, alongside the public footpath which runs through the churchyard, to the Protestant Martyrs of 1556, two of whom lived in the parish, in long demolished cottages in Blackstone Lane.

Finance:

We have met our share of the 100% Parish Contribution in full. We also met our full share of the Benefice Expenses.

Travel:

The Church has a Car Park for 25 to 30 cars, with extra space on the roadside verge and by the lychgate.

There is an hourly Bus Service to Brighton and in the other direction to Horsham, with others to Burgess Hill, Henfield to Worthing Hospital and a shopper bus to Shoreham. We are 10 minutes drive to the A23, and trains from Hassocks, Burgess Hill and Haywards Heath to London. An hourly airport coach runs from the A23 to and from Gatwick and Heathrow. The mainline station at Hassocks is 15mins drive away with excellent connections to London and the Coast

Parish Hall:

The Hall is opposite Terry's Cross and was a small church school, with an attached cottage, now occupied by a part-time caretaker. The Diocese is Custodian Trustee, the Rector and Churchwardens at Woodmancote being Managing Trustees. There is a small Management Committee of local people which deals with the caretaker and repair work. It is used occasionally by the church and available for lettings to other events and organisations.

The Hall finances are separate from the Church.

The Future:

We know that we need to increase our number of regular worshippers from Woodmancote and we have embarked on a Mission Action Plan to reach out into the local community. We held a concert by a local group to celebrate the new kitchen and extension, which was successful and the next project is the Martyrs Memorial. We may ask residents to contribute to the cost and join in an Open Air Service.

We are looking for a Rector who:

1. Will take a leading role in participating with us in an outreach programme to preserve and enhance our role in the community.
2. Is a spiritual leader who will respect our traditional liturgical heritage, and lead dignified and thoughtful worship.
3. Will continue to be closely involved with St Peters Church of England School and encourage the interest of youth in the united benefice.
4. Will be flexible energetic and appreciate the differences of emphasis and different needs of the parishes within the Benefice.
5. We will welcome a leader with a sense of humour, able to draw on the talents of the laity and work with the existing clergy already in the parish.

We can offer

We can offer a beautiful rural location close to many cultural and sporting amenities. A well established clergy both retired and non stipendiary who are familiar with all the benefice congregations together with the support and friendship of a congregation who have a number of skills in the management of secular matters.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE BENEFICE

The Vicarage



The Georgian Vicarage in Henfield is opposite the church. The rooms are generally large and with high ceilings. On the ground floor there is a study, dining room, sitting room, cloakroom and kitchen, and on the first floor there are five bedrooms and a bathroom/WC. Two self-contained cottages adjoin the property, the rent from which is paid direct to the Diocese. The large garden is laid mainly to lawn and shrubs, and there is generous car-parking. The annual church fete is held in the Vicarage garden, where open-air theatrical productions have been staged from time to time.

Clergy and other staff

There are two Assistant Curates. One is stipendiary and was priested in 2009, and the other is non-stipendiary. Henfield has been recognised as a training parish, but whether this continues will be a matter for discussion with the Bishop when the new incumbent is in post. We are also blessed with several retired clergy and a Lay Reader who have permission to officiate.

The well-equipped Benefice Office is now located in St Peter's Church. The paid Benefice Administrator is based there and works four mornings per week. She is available to deal with such administrative tasks as may be required by the incumbent, undertaking much of the routine administration. The post of Parish Youth Worker is vacant and, at present, unfunded.

Terry's Cross

Terry's Cross House in Woodmancote provides residential sheltered accommodation for retired clergy and church workers and their dependents, although sometimes admission is given to others. There are five Trustees, and the management committee that works with them is chaired by the Revd Richard Brown (former p-in-c of Downland parishes). The incumbent is expected to be on the management committee. There are also 8 bungalows operated by a separate housing association.

Terry's Cross has a small chapel, where there are two celebrations of Holy Communion each week.

Schools

Most primary school children from the Benefice attend St Peter's School in Henfield. The Head Teacher has provided the following information:

"At the bottom of our letterhead, three words stand out : Mutual Respect and Care. These are fundamental to us as a school and influence all that we stand for. St Peters is a two form entry primary school, and the only school in the village. Our children come from a rich variety of backgrounds and faiths. We are very much the community school and play our part in village events as well as encouraging members of the public in to school. As an aided primary school, our foundations are very important to us and we enjoy close links with St Peter's Church. We also invite ministers and leaders of other faiths into school to maintain a healthy overview and ensure that all our families are and feel included.

"With regard to our site, we are currently undergoing an extensive building programme that will give us a new classroom, learning resource room, school kitchen, music room and conference room as well as additional small group areas. These are very exciting times at St Peters. We are fortunate with all that we have, with the reputation we enjoy and being part of such a vibrant community."



Some children from the Benefice, particularly in Shermanbury and Woodmancote, go to primary schools in neighbouring villages.

With regard to secondary education, most children from the Benefice go to the church-assisted Steyning Grammar School (a comprehensive school with an ancient foundation as a grammar school). Clergy from the Benefice are on the rota for school assemblies. Secondary education is also provided in Burgess Hill, Hassocks, Haywards Heath and Horsham. There are several private schools in the area, including the Woodard Trust schools at Lancing, Hurstpierpoint and Ardingly.

Health

There is a comprehensive medical centre in Henfield providing a wide range of primary care services and various therapy facilities. The principal general hospital services are provided at the Worthing Hospitals, with others – including some specialist services - in Brighton and Haywards Heath.

Sport and recreation

The Henfield Leisure Centre has well-equipped facilities for indoor sport. There are many other local clubs and facilities for golf, tennis, bowls, cricket, soccer, riding and so on. This is a wonderful rural area for walking, not just on the South Downs but in the beautiful Sussex country side. Sailing can be enjoyed in many locations on the South Coast, and there is flying from Shoreham and Goodwood. Horse racing takes place at Brighton, Plumpton, Lingfield, Goodwood and Fontwell. County Cricket is played at Hove, Horsham and Arundel.

Live professional theatre can be enjoyed at Brighton, Worthing, Chichester and Guildford. Glyndebourne Opera House is only about 20 minutes from Henfield. The area is rich in places of historic interest, with many National Trust and other properties. A taste for gardening can be enjoyed at the various RHS and other gardens in West Sussex

Excellent shopping can be enjoyed in several major centres within an hour by car from Henfield.

Transport

There are fast and frequent train services to London from Brighton and Haywards Heath, with slower services from Burgess Hill and Hassocks. The area is well served by daytime bus routes, both local and national. Gatwick Airport, serving destinations all over the world, is less than an hour from Henfield. There is a choice of ports within reasonable reach providing cross-channel ferry services, and Eurotunnel operates from Folkestone.

Statistics

The statistics below are taken from the annual 'Statistics for Mission' return to the Diocese. The figures are for 2008:

	Henfield*	Shermanbury	Woodmancote
Baptisms	25	3	6
Marriages	4	2	10
Funerals in church	9	0	8
Funerals conducted elsewhere	12	1	6
Easter communicants	164	34	33
Easter attendances	218	39	39
Christmas communicants	197	35	77
Christmas attendances	645	51	124
Church attendances on a 'normal' Sunday	25 young people 132 adults	1 young person 20 adults	0 young people 25 adults

* Note: the Parish Church in Henfield was closed for the re-ordering scheme until Ascension Day. During that period baptisms, weddings and funerals were held at the other churches in the Benefice.