



# The Ham Hill Villages

The Parishes of  
Chiselborough, Middle Chinnock,  
Montacute, Norton sub Hamdon, Odcombe,  
Stoke sub Hamdon and West Chinnock



**‘To know God and to make Him known’**



## Welcome



Loving Father, You made the hills,  
And the people who live in their shadow and shelter are yours,  
Grant to us in our seven villages  
A priest who will reflect your love for us,  
Who will seek your will for us,  
And who will serve us knowing that in serving your people,  
they are serving you.  
We ask this in the name of your son Jesus Christ  
Who lived among us as a servant  
And who is our Saviour and Lord.

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## Looking to the Future

Since the formation of the Benefice a couple of years ago, we have made a start on working together and developing a shared vision, but there is much still to do to enable the Benefice to function as it should and become the church for all of the 5000 or so souls in its care. The Key Tasks on page 3 are seen as priority. Current ministry in these areas is described on pages 7 to 10. Some of the ideas for developing these are as follows:

### Discipleship

- ◆ Encourage and enable lay involvement at every level.
- ◆ Work to improve Bible knowledge of all church members.
- ◆ Encourage opportunities for fellowship.
- ◆ Stress the importance of prayer to the life of the Church.
- ◆ Extend and publicise prayer chains.
- ◆ Encourage Prayer Walking.

### Outreach and Mission

We need to rediscover our call to make disciples in these villages and demonstrate the relevance of the Church today.

- ◆ Make the most of the opportunities at the five schools and the 70 or so occasional offices.
- ◆ Encourage individual prayer for family and friends e.g. the “Thy Kingdom Come” initiative.
- ◆ Be more involved in community life and visible at village events.
- ◆ Equip every Christian to know and share their faith.
- ◆ Organise more outreach events.
- ◆ Hold regular Guest Services.
- ◆ Build on the pub ministry of “Rethink”.
- ◆ More publicity for Alpha; encourage church members to bring a friend.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.  
Proverbs 3:5

### Worship

- ◆ Rebalance the range of services.
- ◆ Explore midweek worship for those unable to meet on Sundays
- ◆ Develop ecumenical partnerships for more non-traditional worship
- ◆ Encourage more musicians to participate in leading worship.

### Pastoral care

- ◆ Become more outward looking and aware of the needs around us.
- ◆ Build on the success of the current team. The group would welcome others willing to be trained to take part in this rewarding ministry.
- ◆ Publicise this ministry more widely to ensure that help is given to those who need it.
- ◆ Allow more time for the clergy to visit those who would prefer an ordained minister.

### Children & Young people

- ◆ Midweek Teenage service is being mooted.
- ◆ Build on Assemblies and Open The Book.
- ◆ Grow the All-age worship and Family Services by developing links with young families.



### Ecumenical Links

There are many Christians living in the Benefice who worship elsewhere, the most popular churches being Martock Christian Fellowship and Yeovil Community Church. Families with children are particularly drawn to their lively youth programmes. Many of these do support ecumenical activities in the Benefice and would like to be more involved in the local church given the right opportunities.



## What we can offer our Rector

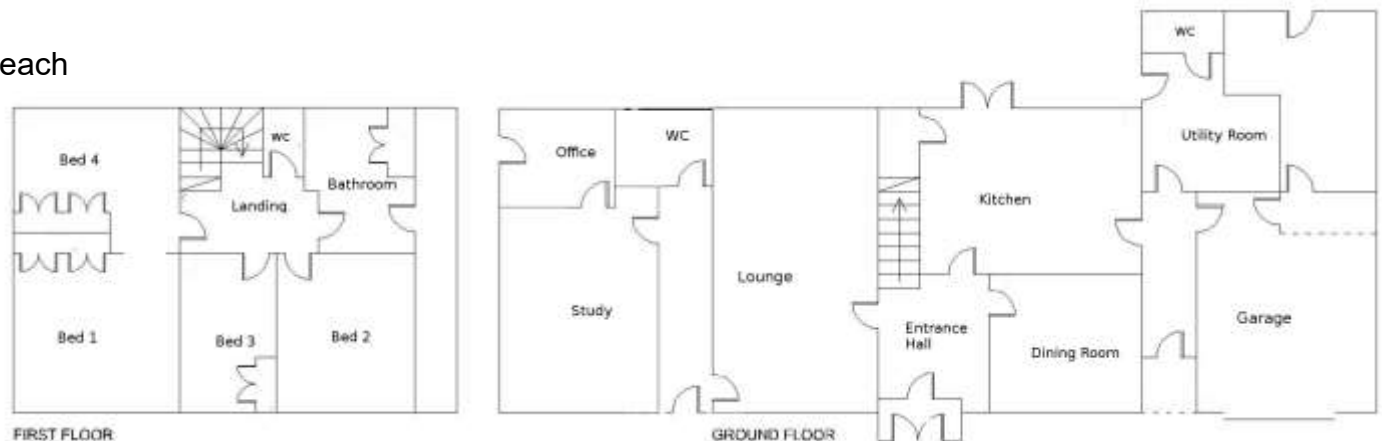
- ◆ A warm welcome into the village communities, to help you settle and make friends and contacts; friendship and hospitality; care and support for you and your family.
- ◆ Prayer support, co-operation and encouragement.
- ◆ A half stipend Associate Vicar.
- ◆ An experienced ministry team including an Associate Priest (SSM) and five Readers (see page 12).
- ◆ Committed lay involvement in all aspects of church life – leading and supporting worship, house-groups, children’s and youth work, pastoral care and administration.
- ◆ Full working expenses and congregations that respect clergy time-off and holidays.
- ◆ Four bedroom rectory in the heart of a thriving, friendly community.
- ◆ Benefice Council of two representatives from each PCC.
- ◆ Church buildings in good condition.
- ◆ Pastoral care team of 5 (see page 13).
- ◆ A Benefice administrator (see page 13).
- ◆ Beautiful rural setting.

## The Rectory

Situated in Castle Street in the centre of Stoke sub Hamdon, this is a four-bedroomed Edwardian detached house with adjoining modern extension housing the study, cloakroom and separate office (with its own entrance) where currently the Benefice Administrator works.

The accommodation comprises entrance hall, dining room, living room, kitchen, utility room and cloakroom on the ground floor, plus four bedrooms and a family bathroom upstairs. There is a double garage and ample off-road parking at the front with large enclosed and private rear garden at the back with views to open countryside.

Plan for indication only - Not to scale





## Benefice Overview

The Ham Hill Villages Benefice comprises seven parishes. It was formed in December 2017 when Odcombe and Montacute having been split from their previous benefice (and Deanery), joined the long established benefice comprising Norton sub Hamdon, Chiselborough, West and Middle Chinnock, together with Stoke sub Hamdon, which until 2013 had been a single parish benefice. The new Benefice is thus still learning to live and work together.



The Benefice population is just over 5000 with about 150 regular worshippers across our seven churches. The Electoral Roll (ER) and Worshipping Community (WC) figures for 2019 are shown for each parish on their individual pages. Usual Sunday Attendance figures are not used because there is no “usual” Sunday, so figures were inconsistent.

Stoke and Montacute are the largest villages with a good range of facilities; Norton has a community shop and all the villages except Middle Chinnock have a pub. The villages are all rural in character surrounded by working farms. There have been some housing developments in recent years, including low cost housing and there are three developments currently under construction in Stoke and Norton which will increase their populations by over 100.

There are five schools in the Benefice, a primary and secondary in Stoke and church primary schools in Montacute, Norton and West Chinnock. Engagement with the primary schools plays an important part in the life of the Benefice.

All the villages have a strong sense of community with many respondents referring in the recent survey to the friendliness and support which they received from the community. Over the years, several of the villages have learnt to work together. We would like to develop this shared sense of community across all seven parishes. The parishes all buy Fairtrade products where possible.

The Benefice is overseen by a Benefice Council chaired by the Rector, when in post, and comprising two representatives from each parish as well as the licensed clergy. The Council deals with cross benefice issues including worship, mission and finance. The Benefice lies within Ivelchester Deanery in the diocese of Bath and Wells; all the parishes contribute to the life of the Deanery and the Lay Dean and Warden of Readers live in the Benefice.

Ham Hill Villages Benefice website: [www.hamhillchurches.org](http://www.hamhillchurches.org)

## Where we are

The Benefice takes its name from Ham Hill, the largest Iron Age Hill Fort in the country, situated in the beautiful countryside of South Somerset. It lies five miles west of Yeovil and just south of the A303, the main road from London to the West Country.



The M5 at Taunton is 25 minutes away by car, Heathrow is two hours and Bristol and Exeter airports an hour. Trains run to London Waterloo from Crewkerne (5 miles) or Yeovil Junction (8 miles) and to London Paddington from Castle Cary (18 miles).





**Current worship**

The current pattern of services is led by the Ministry Team with occasional help from external ministers. Responsibilities are allocated on a 3 month rota. The PCCs recognise the need to review the pattern and times of services. The newly appointed Rector together with others in ministry and representatives of each parish will be involved in developing the appropriate pattern of worship across the Benefice.

	8am	9.30am	11am	6.30pm
<b>1st Sunday</b>	<b>Stoke</b> BCP HC	<b>Middle Chinnock</b> CW HC <b>Montacute</b> CW HC	<b>Stoke ASH</b> Café Service <b>Odcombe</b> AAW <b>Norton</b> AAW (odd months)	<b>Norton /</b> <b>West Chinnock</b> PS (Alternates)
<b>2nd Sunday</b>	<b>Chiselborough</b> BCP HC	<b>Norton</b> CW HC <b>Montacute</b> MP	<b>Stoke</b> CW HC <b>Odcombe</b> CW HC	
<b>3rd Sunday</b>	<b>Middle Chinnock</b> BCP HC <b>Stoke</b> BCP HC	<b>Chiselborough</b> CW HC <b>Montacute</b> BCP HC	<b>Odcombe</b> MP <b>Stoke</b> MP	<b>Norton</b> Evensong (Even months)  <b>West Chinnock</b> FS (4pm)
<b>4th Sunday</b>	<b>Norton</b> BCP HC	<b>West Chinnock</b> CW HC <b>Montacute</b> FS (10am)	<b>Stoke</b> MP <b>Odcombe</b> CW HC <b>Chiselborough</b> Open Door	<b>Chiselborough</b> Taize (Quarterly)

**Occasional offices**

There are about two dozen baptisms a year which take place during main worship services on Sundays. We have an open policy towards baptism for both children and adults. There are around 10 weddings a year, mostly of local people, though some from outside the area choose a local wedding venue for their reception. There are around 45 funerals a year, many of which are taken by Readers. All churchyards are open.



- HC Holy Communion
- CW Common Worship
- BCP Book of Common Prayer
- MP Morning Prayer
- EP Evening Prayer
- FS Family Service
- AAW All Age Worship
- PS Praise Service
- ASH All Saints Hall

5th Sunday: single Joint Benefice  
HC CW at 10am rotating between  
each church.







## Prayer

We understand that prayer is vital for the health of the church, both individually and corporately. There is always more we need to learn and do, but these are some of the current prayer activities:

- ◆ Intercessions in each church are lay led.
- ◆ There are email and telephone prayer chains.
- ◆ Prayer for the villages (weekday morning prayer) in five churches at present.
- ◆ Prayer for Schools is a monthly meeting in Montacute attended by several churches and ecumenical partners.
- ◆ Prayer aids are available in most churches - cards, candle stands, leaflets, books.
- ◆ All churches are open for prayer during the day.
- ◆ Participation in the annual "Thy Kingdom Come" initiative is encouraged across the Benefice.
- ◆ In the summer months, there are ecumenical prayer walks around 3 parishes.



## Discipleship

We are disciples of Jesus and following Him means learning from Him and growing to be more like Him. Beyond Sunday services, we encourage this growth in the following ways:

- ◆ Housegroups - There are currently five groups meeting across the Benefice for Bible study and fellowship. Three are lay led and most meet in members' homes.
- ◆ Lent and Advent Courses - These often bring the housegroups together for a joint course as well as attracting those not in a regular group.
- ◆ Discipleship Explored and The Bible Course have been run in the past and are planned to be run again.
- ◆ Church Lending Libraries - All churches have a small library of devotional books which are regularly circulated and refreshed.
- ◆ Bible Reading Notes - UCB notes are provided free to anyone who wants them. Both adult and youth editions are available in most of the churches.
- ◆ Pew sheets with lectionary readings - Congregations are encouraged to take these home so that they can review the readings later.



Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. Matthew 28:19





### Youth project

Abbi, our youth minister intern, works one day a week in HHV, primarily supporting Hamdon youth group (a secular youth club meeting in Stoke and Norton). She also visits Stanchester Academy, the secondary school in Stoke, twice weekly to help with the Christian Union, work in the Behavioural Unit and also provide pastoral support.

The Youth Project is an ecumenical partnership with Martock Christian Fellowship, a local Free Church; Abbi is on a SWYM placement until July when she completes her training. She is partly funded by some of the parishes and by a grant from the Diocesan mission fund. Mentoring is provided by the Diocesan youth team.



Hamdon Youth Group meeting in the new Families and Youth Centre in Stoke

### Ministry to Children

**Baby and Toddler Group** in Stoke is supported by Martock Christian Fellowship and the Benefice; there are weekly sessions involving about 15 to 20 children and their parents. Many of these families now attend Messy Church.

**Messy Church** is a shared initiative between Stoke, Montacute and Montacute Baptists, started in 2018. Currently there are meetings termly on Saturday mornings which attract about 15 to 20 families.



**Family services.** Most churches have regular services suitable for young families, but attendance is variable, with Montacute and Odcombe attracting the most children. Initiatives to develop closer relationships with families are being explored.

**Schools.** Church members work closely with the primary and secondary schools in the Benefice. Four of the foundation governors in All Saints School for Montacute and Odcombe are members of those churches and Norton and West Chinnock has 3 church members as foundation governors. In the most recent SIAM's inspections All Saints and Norton were rated "outstanding" and West Chinnock "Good". All Saints was also rated "Good" in a recent Ofsted inspection. As well as involvement in school festival services, members of the ministry team take assemblies in all the four primary schools on a regular basis. It is particularly encouraging that they are welcomed by staff and children alike, including at the non-church schools in Stoke sub Hamdon, Castle Primary and Stanchester Secondary (See Youth Project section).

**Open The Book.** Two teams, comprising 10 people from across the Benefice, present Open the Book Bible stories to the four primary schools on a fortnightly basis. The children dress up and are actively involved in the presentations.



## Outreach and Mission

Our churches all recognise the need to reach out to our communities with the Gospel of Jesus, but are struggling to be effective in evangelism. Recent Outreach initiatives include:



- ◆ Alpha - We have run an Alpha course for the last two years, having previously used Christianity Explored, Life Explored and Emmaus courses.

- ◆ Lighthouse Coffee Shop - All Saints Hall in Stoke is open as a coffee shop two mornings a week and offers a listening service as well as opportunities for fellowship and outreach.

- ◆ Faith Pictures - We have run this Church Army course on faith sharing to enable people to better communicate what they believe.



- ◆ A Theatrical production of The Hiding Place - this well known story of Corrie Ten Boom was staged in Norton Village Hall.



'The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest.'  
Matthew 9:37

## Rethink

- ◆ Rethink - A fortnightly gathering in one of the 8 pubs in the Benefice for anyone to join in the conversation on any topic apart from the weather!

- ◆ Events - Church stalls at village fetes and fairs as well as many church organised events which act as opportunities for fellowship and outreach. Some of the churches are also used for concerts and events raising money for the churches and other causes.





## Finance

The financial situation of each parish for the period January 1st to December 31st 2019 is shown in the table below:

PARISH	Unrestricted Income	Restricted Income	Unrestricted Expenditure	Restricted Expenditure	Unrestricted Reserves	Restricted Reserves
Chiselborough*	25749	25	26651	4024	22241	12857
Middle Chinnock	8225	699	8937	1611	7204	2260
Montacute	21784	2124	27684	4084	34059	119
Norton	23289	12683	28705	2171	347	35892
Odcombe*	19300	0	18692	0	38463	4656
Stoke*	26025	6132	27469	5708	31759	24128
West Chinnock*	23814**	0	21891	0	4865	0
<b>TOTALS</b>	148186	21663	160029	17598	107179	55784

\* As at 25th March 2020 these accounts are unexamined

\*\*This includes £8,000 grant for re-ordering for which the expenditure fell in the previous financial year.

- ◆ The Parish Share for 2019 was paid in full by every parish except West Chinnock which paid only 60% due to a drop in WC from 19 to 10 leading to a substantial drop in giving.
- ◆ All parishes donate to external charities, some by tything, others on a more ad-hoc basis.
- ◆ Each church has a dedicated treasurer. All PCC accounts are in good order.
- ◆ There is a Benefice Treasurers' Forum which coordinates cross Benefice finances and acts as a support group.
- ◆ Full accounts can be made available to applicants on request.
- ◆ The Finance Dashboard for each parish can be found at <https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/supporting-parishes/finances/for-treasurers/parish-finance-dashboards/ivelchester-deanery/>





## Ministry Team Members



**Rev Annie Gurner**, Associate Vicar (half stipend).

With a background in business, lay leadership and renewal ministry, I trained at Ridley Hall in 2003 and served in Lincoln and Ely dioceses. I was part-time rural mission adviser in this Diocese from 2012 and was appointed Associate Vicar in 2016 with a brief to grow the churches spiritually and numerically, focused on Montacute, Odcombe and Stoke. I chair the Ministry Team and Pastoral Care Group and take a lead in Messy Church, the Youth Minister Project, Alpha and a new house group. I have a passion for mission, every member ministry and sharing God's love in the community. I also have a passion for my grandchildren, border terriers and bees!



**Rev Gary Edmunds**, Associate Priest (SSM)

I was ordained in 2015 and licensed as a self supporting Associate Priest in 2019. I'm also a Registered Nurse and work during the week for NHS Blood and Transplant in blood donation and am also a lead RCN Steward. I'm married to Sarah, also a nurse and have two boxer dogs. I tend to concentrate on Eucharistic services, baptisms and weddings. I am continually inspired by God's faithfulness to us and to where he leads us.



**Chris Stock**

Licensed as Reader in 2012 in Salisbury, I currently Chair the Benefice Council and am funeral coordinator for four of the parishes, taking many funeral services and providing the appropriate care. I am also Deanery Warden of Readers. A firm believer in God being present everywhere, I am driven by St Augustine's advice 'that we should pray as though everything depended on God, and work as though everything depended on you'. I enjoy woodworking, cricket and walking with my two black Labradors.



**David Mangles**

I was licensed as a Reader in 2015 after realising that I was already doing the job. I have a passion to teach and preach God's Word in church, housegroup or enquirer's course. I oversee the housegroups and help run Alpha or similar courses. I live on a cider farm which I run with my son as well as working as a self employed electronics engineer. I enjoy making things from scrap and think the best place for fellowship is when walking the dog or in the pub.



**Susan Laycock.**

I was licensed as a Reader in the Oxford Diocese in 1983. I then became a bereavement counsellor with Cruse and later in West Sussex a trainer and supervisor. It is still very close to my heart to share in the privilege of walking alongside those who grieve. I have served as a Reader in four dioceses, including Southern Africa. I try in life's every day to fulfil the call I heard so many years ago: "Comfort, comfort my people, says your God." (Isaiah 40:1) I do this remembering that significant parts of the Christian story are played out in a garden, which is probably where you will find me if the weather is at all reasonable.



**Colleen Jerrold**

When I came to faith in my teens I was given the verse from Proverbs 3: "In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy paths." After a career in teaching, this led to me becoming a Reader in 2004, helping in Youth Club and Sunday School and currently going into schools with OTB. I am part of the Pastoral Care team which links well with the ministry of Funerals. I seek to be relevant to where people are today when preaching the Word and leading a House Group. My faith and my family are most important in my life.



**Anthony Russell**

I have been a Reader since 1987, having been licensed by the Bishop of Oxford and subsequently serving in the Salisbury diocese. I was director of music in an independent school before retiring as a teacher and settling in Bath and Wells. I have also held appointments as organist and choirmaster in several parish churches. I am now a Reader Emeritus. I have a heart for the persecuted church and since 1998 I have been a speaker and area representative for Barnabas Fund.

**Retired Priest—Rev Richard Terrell**



I am a retired priest living in Norton. I trained at Wells Theological College (69-71) and have been vicar of various parishes in Somerset. I currently assist with services in the Benefice and beyond as required. I am responsible for the All Age Worship at Norton and coordinate The Norton Festival ([nortonfestival.org](http://nortonfestival.org)). With my wife, Anna, we organise Coffee Mornings and are involved in all aspects of parish life.

**Administrator - Caroline Lewars**



(Currently works two mornings a week)

I applied for the post of Parish Administrator as I felt that I could put my secretarial skills to work for the Church. I have worked as a teacher and as a teaching assistant, and I also work in my husband's office. At present I stand in as organist at Montacute church and spend a lot of time playing the cello with various groups, as well as finding peace and quiet working in the garden.

**Lay Pastoral Assistants**

Founded in 2016, the Pastoral Care Group comprises five trained and commissioned people, who work alongside the clergy, to offer hospital and home visiting, home communions, bereavement care and more. Each year they organise an All Souls Service and a Carer's Service. They meet quarterly for group supervision, to support each other and to pray for the needs of the parishes.

**Churchwardens**

There are nine churchwardens across the seven parishes, but one of the churches is currently seeking someone to take on the role.

**Music**

All the churches have someone to play the organ or keyboard, though occasionally electronic alternatives are used. All use modern hymn books or a video projector. There is a Benefice Choir with around 20 members under the direction of Chris Denman, the organist in Norton. They sing at joint benefice and other special services. A small music group accompanies the organ at some services.

**Safeguarding**

As a Benefice we abide by the Diocesan Safeguarding procedures and each parish has a Safeguarding Officer. Each PCC has its own safeguarding policy and most relevant personnel have attended the necessary Diocesan Safeguarding workshops and have DBS certificates; the remainder are in the process of doing this.





## Chiselborough

The village sits in a sheltered valley surrounded by five hills; until 1914 it formed part of the Ilchester Estate. Its population is about 275 most of whom live in traditional Ham-stone cottages. There are a few larger houses and two groups of former council houses, one at each end of the village. More recently ten 'affordable' houses have been built a mile away from the centre of the village on the boundary with Norton.



Chiselborough is well known for its community spirit and friendliness; it is a place where people look out for, and look after each other. There are three communal facilities, the church, the pub and the village hall. The church is dedicated to St Peter and St Paul; it has seen many changes over the centuries but is chiefly known for its unusual layout having a low central tower between nave and chancel; it has an octagonal spire which was added in the 16th century, one of only a few in Somerset.

There is a faithful group of regular worshippers at a range of services including the informal Open Door, the popular CW communion with Sunday School and an occasional Taize service. There are many others who support the church through their involvement on the flower rota, cleaning the church, maintaining the churchyard and also organising and hosting the regular coffee mornings in aid of the church; there is also a band of bell-ringers who ring before the main Sunday morning services. The Parish Council has long been supportive of the church. ER is 46, WC is 24. The church is in good order; the recent quinquennial inspection identified a number of matters requiring attention but they are not of major significance and are within the resources of the PCC to deal with. The organ has recently undergone extensive renovation. There are plans to install toilet facilities. The house assigned to the Associate Vicar is in the village.



Chiselborough church is unique, having a combined tower and spire at the "wrong" end. The tradition of carving pumpkins into lanterns is said to have originated in Chiselborough.



The Cat Head pub is under new and enthusiastic management which makes it a popular drinking and eating venue for those both within and outside the village. There are regular 'special' events to maintain interest. The village hall, a traditional Victorian school before it closed in 1946, hosts many village events including the monthly parish lunches in the winter, the film club, for which a Lottery Grant was obtained for its equipment, the art class, the Autumn Fair, the St George's Day supper and the biennial performance of Christmas Crackers. The village also has an annual summer fete accompanied by a flower show in the church.

Our current Mission Priorities are:  
Music group – including young people  
Church to be a welcoming and comfortable environment.  
Develop disciple-making and home groups

Parish Spotlight: [https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/ParishSpotlight\\_510169-Chiselborough.pdf](https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/ParishSpotlight_510169-Chiselborough.pdf)

Parish Dashboard: [https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/IVELCHESTER\\_510169\\_Chiselborough.pdf](https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/IVELCHESTER_510169_Chiselborough.pdf)

Chiselborough Village [www.chiselboroughvillage.co.uk](http://www.chiselboroughvillage.co.uk)





## Middle Chinnock

St Margaret's is a small, simple church building with some remaining medieval features namely the south doorway and porch (circa 1100), some Norman stonework in the north side of the tower, (circa 1200) and the tower (about 1400) which is 40ft high with three bells. The arch over the south door is Saxon and in good preservation. Under the side seat in the porch is an arched niche in which stands the head and shoulders of the stone effigy of a woman, the rest being below the pavement. This Grade 2\* listed church is built of ham stone with slate and stone tiles, standing on an elevated site overlooking the older part of the village. It has clear glass windows and internally retains its 12<sup>th</sup> century font and 18<sup>th</sup> century pulpit.



Whilst the church will seat around 90 people, the electoral roll has only 11 members, most of whom are regular worshippers attending at least one of our two monthly services. (ER is 11, WC is 8) Average 9.30am services have an attendance of 20 to 30 and the main festival services are very well attended by the wider community. Despite, or maybe because of its simplicity, Middle Chinnock Church has a lovely atmosphere, which is commented upon by so many visitors.

There are seven members of the PCC who work well raising funds to care for the fabric of the church and keep the churchyard in good order. These fundraising activities also form part of

their outreach to the community, and are always well supported by villagers from both the Chinnocks as well as Chiseldon & Norton.

Middle Chinnock is a small village with only 54 houses, some of which are widely spread, but there is a good community spirit and many of the non-church members form part of the Flower and Key holder rotas, and are generous in participating when we hold Open Garden and Flower Festival weekends.

Our current Mission Priorities are:  
Serving our community and showing the love of Christ for His people in practical ways.  
Working more closely with other churches in the benefice.

Parish Dashboard: [https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/IVELCHESTER\\_510167\\_Middle-Chinnock.pdf](https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/IVELCHESTER_510167_Middle-Chinnock.pdf)

West and Middle Chinnock form one civil parish so for other weblinks, see the West Chinnock page.



There are only about a dozen houses in the main part of Middle Chinnock, but the village does have an airfield. The cricketer Vic Marks was born here and used to play cricket at the Manor Farm and the Rectory.





## Montacute

Montacute is a pretty ham stone village on the northern side of Ham Hill with a population of about 800, best known for the National Trust's 16th century Montacute House. There is a hotel (adjacent to and supportive of the church), and an inn, Post Office and stores, filling station, and village hall. There is a frequent bus service to nearby Yeovil.



All Saints Church Primary School in Montacute serves both Montacute and Odcombe. The school has close links with the church and holds various events and services there. Several church members are Foundation Governors of the school. A Baptist Chapel in the village, with whom the church has close connections, holds services on a regular basis.

St Catherine's: The well-maintained (and well heated) church dates from the 12th century with major rebuilding by the Victorians in 1869. It is open daily and has CCTV and an audio loop. The churchyard is open. At the moment the church is pursuing a project to install a small kitchen and a toilet. We have recently installed a contactless giving terminal. ER is 43, WC is 32.

We offer a range of styles of worship with a full set of vestments for use when appropriate. Services include a lay led Family Service with a linked

craft session beforehand, which regularly attracts young families. The laity take an active part in services; reading lessons, leading intercessions etc. There is a children's area and prayer corner in the church. There is a small "God's Acre" project in the churchyard.



Our special services include Good Friday, Rogation, Harvest, St. Catherine's Day, Christingle, Carol Service and Remembrance Sunday, which is shared with the Baptist congregation and minister (the War Memorial being in the Church).

Messy Church is held once a term jointly with the Baptists and other benefice churches. We hold bi-monthly dinners which some non-churchgoers attend. The church is used for concerts on an occasional basis.

A monthly time of Prayer for Schools is held at St Catherine's church and is organised by a member of the congregation. Joint Bible studies are held with the Baptist church, meeting either in their church hall or the house of one of the church members.

Best known for the Elizabethan Montacute House, It has been the location for several major films including "Sense and Sensibility"



Our current Mission Priorities are:  
Attracting more people to faith and into church  
Improving regular attendance  
Nurturing Disciples

Parish Spotlight: [https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/ParishSpotlight\\_510174-Montacute.pdf](https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/ParishSpotlight_510174-Montacute.pdf)

Parish Dashboard: [https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/IVELCHESTER\\_510174\\_Montacute.pdf](https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/IVELCHESTER_510174_Montacute.pdf)





## Norton sub Hamdon

Norton sub Hamdon is a picturesque village set at the foot of Ham Hill. It features many traditional ham-stone cottages and houses, as well as recently built homes, and has access to many footpaths and bridleways, making it popular with dog walkers, horse-riders and walkers alike. The village offers many amenities, including a primary school ([www.nortonsubhamdonprimary.co.uk](http://www.nortonsubhamdonprimary.co.uk)), post office, community shop, pub, large modern village hall ([www.nshvillagehall.co.uk](http://www.nshvillagehall.co.uk)), two recreational fields, café/reading room for meetings, and is on a bus route.



Norton is a friendly, welcoming and inclusive village, with a strong sense of community, in which the church plays an important role and is well supported by the village, especially by the 'Friends of Norton Church' group.

St Mary's is a Grade 1 listed church originating from the 13<sup>th</sup> century. It has many outstanding architectural features such as mediaeval windows, bell tower and dovecote, and it is featured in Simon Jenkins' book "England's Thousand Best Churches". There is a robed choir, as well as an active group of bell-ringers and flower arrangers. There is a well-kept churchyard tended by a band of "Merry Mowers" numbering around twenty. ER is 46, WC is 32

The village has a range of activities which take place on a regular basis, including the Annual Flower Show shared with Chiselborough, monthly coffee mornings at different homes around the village, a monthly Ladies' Group, occasional musical concerts, monthly craft meetings (sewing, knitting etc), organised village walks and the annual Norton Festival ([www.nortonfestival.org](http://www.nortonfestival.org)).

The church supports Akamba Aid Fund, a charity founded by Norton residents, providing clean water and proper sanitation in rural eastern Kenya). It also supports Christian Aid.

Our current Mission Priorities are:

- Develop appropriate ways of engaging with people in worship (particularly under 50s!)
- Develop disciple-making and home groups
- Create an environment of welcome (e.g. toilet)
- Continue to develop community engagement

Parish Spotlight: [https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/ParishSpotlight\\_510176-NortonsubHamdon.pdf](https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/ParishSpotlight_510176-NortonsubHamdon.pdf)

Parish Dashboard: [https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/IVELCHESTER\\_510176\\_Norton-sub-Hamdon.pdf](https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/IVELCHESTER_510176_Norton-sub-Hamdon.pdf)

Paddy Ashdown (The Right Honourable The Lord Ashdown of Norton-sub-Hamdon GCMG CH KBE PC) lived in Norton from 1976 until his death in 2018. As well as being leader of the Liberal Democrats from 1988 to 1999, he had been in the SBS, MI6 and the UN.





## Odcombe

Odcombe is a delightful, tranquil rural village of around 750 people, adjacent to Montacute. As well as the church, it has a thriving pub and village hall in the community. The pub has its own micro-brewery and campsite, and is a real hub in the village. The village hall is the base for everything from toddler groups, film club and short mat bowls to the Odcombe Flower Show. There is a large plant nursery in the village and also a recently started pop up eco supermarket on Saturday mornings.

Odcombe was the home of Thomas Coryat who in 1608 was the first “Grand Tourist” travelling Europe on foot. His writings became very popular and he is credited with introducing the fork to English dinner tables. His memorial in the church continues to draw visitors from across the world.

Odcombe is one of the last few villages in the country to still have its own carols, introduced several hundred years ago and sung by oral tradition ever since, in the church, around the village and in the pub.



Church members are open to new ideas, and the PCC are keen to do all that they can to both serve the congregation and grow it. There is a passion for worship and prayer. ER is 21, WC is 23.

Crib and Carol Services are always full to bursting, attracting the wider community. As a rural parish, the agricultural services are also important with a popular harvest festival and supper. At Remembrance Sunday there is a gathering at the war memorial which always attracts many non Church-goers.

Our current Mission Priorities are:  
Nurture faith beyond the sermon.  
Introduce more accessible and inclusive liturgy.  
Update church infrastructure to facilitate more community based activities.  
Encourage prayer and discipleship.

Parish Spotlight: [https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/ParishSpotlight\\_510177-Odcombe.pdf](https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/ParishSpotlight_510177-Odcombe.pdf)

Parish Dashboard: [https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/IVELCHESTER\\_510177\\_Odcombe.pdf](https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/IVELCHESTER_510177_Odcombe.pdf)





## Stoke sub Hamdon

The population is over 2,000; the centre of the village is made up of older properties, with more modern houses on the outskirts. There are some small ex-council estates, with most of their houses now in private ownership, some sheltered accommodation and a housing association estate. The village is expanding with 4 recent housing developments with over 60 new homes. Many residents work in Yeovil, and some at RNAS Yeovilton. There are workshop units, shops and farms in the parish providing employment. There is an hourly bus service to Yeovil.



The village has a supermarket, a convenience store, two public houses, a Working Men's Club, GP and dental surgeries, a veterinary practice, primary and secondary schools, a car repair garage and several retail businesses. Many village groups provide social, recreational and leisure activities. There is a modern village hall with a children's play area in its grounds, and our own church hall, All Saints' Hall. This hosts a Coffee Shop two mornings a week, run by church members with help from volunteers from both the church and village and includes a Listening Service.

Famous for supplying Ham stone to buildings across the West Country including Montacute House and Wells Cathedral.

St Mary the Virgin: Our 12th century Grade I Listed parish church is well-maintained, centrally heated, has two small meeting rooms, a toilet, and modern audio/visual facilities with loop. It features in Simon Jenkins' '1000 Best Churches'. The roof has recently been repaired thanks to a large grant from the Listed Places of Worship Roof Repair Fund and the generosity of church members and villagers.

Our Sunday worship ranges from BCP Communion to informal lay led services, with small music group and projector for worship songs. There is also a lay led Cafe Church in All Saints Hall. The Churchmanship is evangelical, with high regard for scripture, the power of prayer and the work of the Holy Spirit. Special services include a Good Friday Walk of Witness, an All Souls' Day service of remembrance, Remembrance Sunday service on the top of Ham Hill, attended by several hundred. At Christmas we hold popular Christingle, Crib and Carol Services. All of these are attended by many who do not come to other services. ER is 49, WC is 33. A Bell Ringing team meets regularly.

Parish Spotlight: [https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/ParishSpotlight\\_510179-StokesubHamdon.pdf](https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/ParishSpotlight_510179-StokesubHamdon.pdf)

Parish Dashboard: [https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/IVELCHESTER\\_510179\\_Stoke-sub-Hamdon.pdf](https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/IVELCHESTER_510179_Stoke-sub-Hamdon.pdf)

Stoke village [www.stoke-sub-hamdon.co.uk](http://www.stoke-sub-hamdon.co.uk)  
Stanchester Academy [stanchester-academy.co.uk/](http://stanchester-academy.co.uk/)  
Castle school [www.castleprimaryschool.org/](http://www.castleprimaryschool.org/)

Our current Mission Priorities are:  
Involvement in community (Coffee shop, baby and toddler and youth club),  
Improving communications (noticeboards, website + welcome leaflet/pack)  
Prayer life – promote prayer within church and in village– eg pew cards, prayer corner, prayer walks  
School and Youthwork – support youth minister's work; expand Open The Book teams.







## West Chinnock

With a population of 470, the village is made up of older properties and more recent developments as well as council houses, many of which are now privately owned. There is a good spread of ages with a popular primary school and pre-school, many working families as well as a good number of retired folk. Village activities centre around the school, the village hall, the church and the pub, with an active WI, Gardening Club, PFA and other organisations.

The popular village pub “The Muddled Man” was previously “The Salamander”, named after the 1866 Grand National winner which ran on the racecourse in a neighbouring village before the course was moved to West Chinnock in 1868.

West Chinnock has a long sporting heritage with a horse racecourse in the 19th century, a long established cricket club (once playing Somerset County Cricket club at the village ground), football teams (adult and youth) and the recent “Chinnock Chase” attracting hundreds of runners from near and far. The pub has a very popular bowling alley, attracting teams from across the county.



St Mary's Church was built in 1890 to replace a smaller building dating back to the 13th century. Recent re-ordering has added a toilet, vestry and new heating. There are currently three services: An afternoon Family Service aimed at primary school age children, an informal Evening Praise service with Bible teaching and modern songs and a Common Worship Communion attended by 20 to 30 people. Special services include Harvest Festival, Carol Service, and Remembrance, which last year attracted over 100 villagers with 8 village organisations laying wreaths and all of the Primary School Year 6 playing a part.

Our current Mission Priorities are:  
Work with children/young people;  
Encouraging acceptance and appreciation of the re-ordering changes.  
Pastoral care of the village community.



ER is 15, WC is 10

There is a housegroup which meets weekly for Bible study and fellowship. There are social events organised throughout the year which attract people from across the community and beyond. The church supports local charities including “School in a Bag” and Children’s Hospice South West.

Church Facebook Page: [www.facebook.com/stmaryswestchinnock](http://www.facebook.com/stmaryswestchinnock)

Village website: [www.westandmiddlechinnock.co.uk](http://www.westandmiddlechinnock.co.uk)

West Chinnock School [www.westchinnockprimary.co.uk](http://www.westchinnockprimary.co.uk)

Parish Spotlight: [https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/ParishSpotlight\\_510168-West-Chinnock.pdf](https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/ParishSpotlight_510168-West-Chinnock.pdf)

Parish Dashboard: [https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/IVELCHESTER\\_510168\\_West-Chinnock.pdf](https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/IVELCHESTER_510168_West-Chinnock.pdf)

### Ivelchester Deanery

The Ham Hill Villages Benefice constitutes 7 of the 26 parishes of the historic Deanery of Ivelchester (founded in 1218). The Deanery has a population of some 29,000 spread across 180 square miles. The declared membership in 2019 was 692. The parishes of the Deanery are grouped together into seven benefices. Within these you will find 12 primary schools and two secondary schools. Employment is considered 'full' by national measures but like many rural parts of Somerset the incomes generated by households is mixed and dependant on whether high income skilled aerospace jobs are held or agricultural and 'cottage' industries undertaken.

The opportunities and challenges for parishes to be places of mission and worship are at the core of both the Deanery Mission Plan and those generated by each parish. The DMP is a plan forged by the parishes with the core aims of supporting the parishes in their local mission and worship through enabling partnership and facilitating development of, and sharing of ministries. As a Deanery we have a 'Mission Development Facilitator' and we are about to appoint a 'Discipleship and Prayer Facilitator' under a Bishop's Mission Order. We are a Deanery with really active lay authorised ministries, our Readers, Lay Worship Assistants, Lay Pastoral Assistants, our Wardens and our Lay Dean.

Partnership and the sharing of ministry and experience is a key way in which our parishes are looking to fulfil their calling. The Deanery Chapter recognises its need to model the gifting and sharing of experience and resources where called for across the parishes. As such it is hoped that any new incumbent within the Deanery will be open to sharing their expertise in enabling and equipping all for their local mission.

Talking of chapter, we are a sociable group, supportive of colleagues. We meet monthly on rotation in folks' homes for either Communion or Bible Study, and above all for the chance to share and care for each other in our ministry. We also take the opportunity at Easter and Christmas to get to the pub and have a good lunch together!

### Diocesan vision

*In response to God's immense love for us we seek to be God's people, living and telling the story of Jesus.*



Our vision speaks of the story of Jesus; his life, teaching and work, his death and resurrection; the story which is the context of our faith and the content of our message.

We seek **to live** this story as disciples of Jesus Christ in the world and **to tell** it, both in sharing the good news and by the way in which our lives speak about Him.

The diocesan strategy is built around three priorities:

1. To place mission and evangelism at the heart of all we do.
2. To re-align our resources towards mission.
3. To identify, develop and release the gifts of all our people.

The priorities provide a framework for decision-making and planning at parish, benefice, deanery, archdeaconry and diocesan levels.

