



# Title Parishes 2026

St Peter's Church, Bengeworth, Evesham  
Profile Pack



**"Thank you for your interest in coming to the Diocese of Worcester. It's a friendly diocese in the heart of England, where we seek to grow as in love for God and neighbour. I wish you well as you seek to discern where God is calling you to serve."**

Bishop Martin Gorick, Acting Bishop of Worcester and Bishop of Dudley

### **It is exciting because...**

... we are developing creative new patterns of ministry in these changing times: though there are fewer stipendiary clergy than in the recent past there are now more people offering for self-supporting ordained ministry as well as licensed and authorised lay ministry than ever before;

... we are implementing, after much reflection and consultation, an imaginative 'Kingdom People' vision which seeks to envision our people in their core task of proclaiming the Kingdom;

... differences in 'churchmanship' are not divisive in a diocese which has a genuine 'family feel' to it;

... we have a dynamic and mission minded Bishop's Staff team committed to working with lay and ordained colleagues throughout the Diocese to join in God's mission.



## About the Diocese of Worcester

The Diocese of Worcester is one of 41 (42 including the Diocese in Europe) that make up the Church of England.

The Diocese of Worcester also forms part of the Province of Canterbury.

The diocese covers an area of 670 square miles and includes the County of Worcestershire, the Metropolitan Borough of Dudley, and a few parishes in northern Gloucestershire, south east Wolverhampton and Sandwell - so we are not short on variety (it's a great place to serve a curacy, because we have nearly every context you could imagine!)

From the urban north, with its impressive history and cultural mix, to the agricultural south where the rich colours of rural life flavour many people's day to day experience, the diocese has much to offer to visitor, resident and worshipper alike.

The diocese was founded in around 679 by St Theodore of Canterbury for the tribe of the Hwicce. The diocese covers a population of 909,000.

We have:

92 benefices

169 parishes

267 churches



In 2022:

8,600 people attended a church service on an average week. 6,900 attended a church service on an average Sunday.

There were 14,400 on the electoral roll of our churches. 11,000 people attended Easter Services.

23,800 people attended Christmas services

1,630 children and adults were baptised in our churches





Our diocesan vision is to grow as Kingdom People, sharing the good news of Jesus' love in Worcestershire and Dudley through churches that are growing in health and sustainability.

## Priorities 2023 – 2030

Over the next few years, we aim to:

- Double the number of children and young people worshipping in our churches.
- Create 100 new worshipping communities offering a range of ways for people to come to faith and worship God. (eg Forest Church / Café Church / Walking Church).
- Invest in the renewal of around a dozen churches to ensure that each major area of population has at least one church with 150 people attending weekly, enabling them to support other local churches.
- Underpin these by investing in our clergy and lay leaders, providing training and development opportunities to enable them to grow and feel supported and equipped for mission.

## Help and support available

As we continue to grow as Kingdom People, there are a number of ways in which your parish can get involved in the journey and access help and support.

Every church is different we want to encourage and resource you in your own context, strengthening local churches as you worship God, make disciples, share hope, and transform communities. For further information on 'Growing as Kingdom People', please visit: [www.cofe-worcester.org.uk/growing-kingdom-people/](http://www.cofe-worcester.org.uk/growing-kingdom-people/)

## Ministry



There is a broad range of Churchmanship within the Diocese of Worcester. The Diocese has around 90 full-time stipendiary clergy, plus around 60 non-stipendiary and ministers in secular employment. We are also blessed with a large number of retired clergy, who continue to provide ministry to parishes across our diocese.

There is an extensive lay ministry in the diocese with 121 Licensed Lay Ministers (Readers) and a large number of Authorised Lay Ministers, who have completed a year's training course in areas such as worship, children's and youth work, evangelism and parish administration.

## Title Parish General Information

### Parish

Bengeworth and Hampton with Sedgeberrow and Hinton on the Green

(Whilst this is the legal name of the parish, St Peter's currently functions as a stand-alone parish and the Curacy would be based there.)

This is a training post for a deacon who expects to be ordained priest.

### Training Incumbent

Andy Smith

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Evesham  
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[andy@stpetersbengeworth.org](mailto:andy@stpetersbengeworth.org)

**Date of ordination:** June 2018

**Length of time in present role:** 4 years

### Previous posts and theological training:

2021-Present, St Peter's Bengeworth

2018-2021, Curacy at All Saints Worcester

2016-2018, Theological Training at Trinity College Bristol

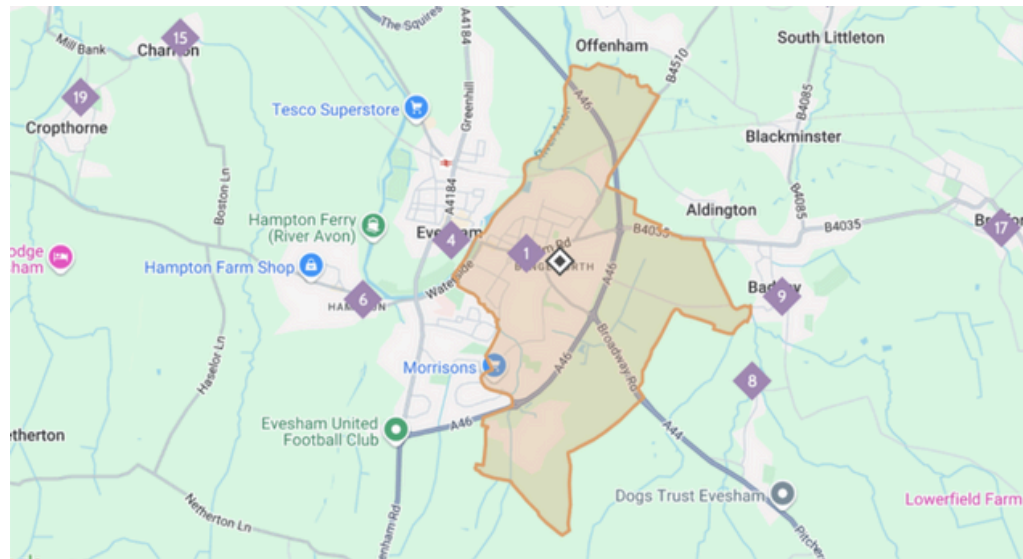
Previous Training Experience: Mike Edwards, 2024-Present



## The Context: the parish setting

The parish of Bengeworth in Evesham is a fair size (around 2.5x1.5 miles) with the church located pretty centrally meaning most places can be walked to from church within 30 minutes (or a 5-minute drive in reasonable traffic). The housing in the centre of the parish is generally older with newer, growing housing developments on the southern and eastern edges of the parish near the Evesham Bypass (A46). Transport links are generally good and Evesham benefits from a great central location nationally with the M25 being less than two hour's drive away and Birmingham, Bristol, and the Welsh border all around an hour from Evesham by car.

Evesham is also near some other great places with Cheltenham, Stratford-Upon-Avon, Worcester and the Cotswolds all around 30 minute's drive away. Evesham has a strong agricultural heritage which remains to this day and as such is significant for the local economy and important when it comes to local employment opportunities. There are several good doctors' surgeries and a good community hospital although there is no local A&E department (the nearest one being Worcester Royal). Around 12,000 people live in the parish with a significant Eastern European population (around 15%) and is just below the national average according to the Index of Multiple Deprivations (IMD)



Evesham is classified as a country town.



## The Church

Andy is responsible for St Peter's, Bengeworth. There are three further churches within the parish of Bengeworth and Hampton with Sedgeberrow on the Green.

## Ecclesiastical Tradition

St Peter's is broadly charismatic and evangelical in tradition and relaxed / informal in its expression although there is a very broad churchmanship under one roof due to being a Renewal Church (from September 2021) so not everyone would describe their own theology / ecclesiology in these terms..

There are currently 93 people on our electoral roll.



The band at our 11am gathering



Café Church on a 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday

## Sunday Services

Every Sunday we have:

- an 8am BCP service
- a 9.15am Common Worship Eucharist (robed)
- an 11am 'Informal gathering' with modern worship songs and a greater focus on in-depth Bible teaching.

Our average actual Sunday attendance is currently around 100 across the three services. This is typically around 8 at the 8am, 32 at the 9.15am, and 60 at the 11am including 15-20 under 18s.

## Weekday Services

Tuesday 10am Eucharist

## Occasional Offices

The number of Occasional offices varies but in 2024 there were:

- 10 Baptisms (with a mixture of infant and full-immersion adult baptisms)
- 3 Thanksgivings for the birth of a child
- 16 Funerals
- 8 Burials of Ashes
- 3 Weddings



Wider Staff Team Including Churchwardens



A recent baptism

## Pattern of daily offices or daily prayers

The wider staff team (paid staff and wardens) meet for morning prayer every Monday morning but beyond this there is not corporate prayer each morning and people are encouraged to do morning prayer each day at home. We are currently looking at ways to develop the corporate prayer life of the church.





**Incumbent**  
Revd Andy Smith



**Curate**  
Revd Mike Edwards



**Ministries Coordinator**  
Kimberley Gunn



**Children's and Families Worker**  
Emily Holmes



**Youth Worker p/t**  
(Vacancy)

## Staff Team



## Areas of Particular Mission and Ministry

St Peter's is a community that is increasingly reaching out to our community with the love of Jesus through the proclamation of the good news in word and action. A member of the church described us as a 'faith making church' and over the last four years we've seen around 15 people come to faith and join our church family through running regular Alpha courses and other evangelistic activity.

Just this year we've launched 'The Point' our pay-what-you-like Community Café which provides a space for the elderly, otherwise lonely, and parents with preschoolers. This is proving to be a great success and is doing a great job of connecting people in with the church family.

We have a growing ministry to our two local C of E schools where we have regular contact with around 800 primary school children. Both schools are open to working creatively with us to give the children opportunities to explore the Christian faith and we've recently appointed Emily as our Children's and Families Worker meaning we can now offer a wider range of support to both schools.

In addition to the above, we're one of three churches involved in running the YouNite ecumenical youth project which runs in the town every Friday night during term time, a care home ministry, the ARK fund project (ARK stands for 'Acts of Radical Kindness') which has been set up simply to love and bless our neighbours. There are also various other creative ways we're developing connections with our community.



'The Point' Community Cafe



An Alpha Away Day

### Lay Involvement

St Peter's is blessed to have a large number of people that give their time and passion so generously to ensure that ministry and missional activity can run, grow and develop.

### Life Groups

We currently have three active Life Groups with two of these meeting in the evening and one during the daytime. We see this as being a priority for development as there's no better way to grow in maturity than to have small groups where people can practice the way of Jesus together, deepening their understanding of scripture and cheering each other on in their walk of faith.

### Opportunities for the development of fresh expressions of church

On this front, the Sky's the limit! There are no immediate plans for a new fresh expression but our hope is that we'll be either planting a new church or supporting the renewal of an existing church in the next couple of years... It's what the church has always done!

### Particular future plans already established

Part of the Worcester Diocese' missional strategy is to see a thriving church of over 150 people in every major centre of population and St Peter's is getting closer to that ambition... St Peter's was itself a Renewal Project when Andy along with a planting team arrived at St Peter's back in 2021 from All Saints Worcester and as such, planting, resourcing, growth and continual development is part of our DNA.

### Congregations(s) mainly communal or mainly gathered:

The church has a strong and committed core that live in the Parish but is increasingly gathering people from further afield. Currently around one third of St Peter's members live outside the parish.

## Areas and types of co-operation with other local churches (either Anglican or ecumenical):

As mentioned above, a significant partnership is the Friday 'YouNite' youth group which was started in 2023 when St Peter's, the VECC, and Evesham Baptist Church came together to offer a Christian Youth Club in the town. This has been a great success with around 20-30 young people attending every week and the fact that it's run by three churches means that the load on the team is spread, the financial burden per church is reduced and we benefit from the wide range of gifts present in the team. Beyond this, there are other points in the year when local churches have come together on a more informal basis for lent courses, the Good Friday Walk of Witness, and other activities.





## Vision and Priorities

### How does the church see itself?

Broadly speaking the church sees itself as a warm and welcoming community which is seeking to help people come alive in their faith and grow as disciples of Jesus. Increasingly, there is a sense of unity across the various gatherings and traditions, accepting people who worship in a variety of different ways. In the past it's felt a bit like we've had three churches under one roof, whereas now it very much feels like three congregations who are all part of one missional family.

### What is its vision of mission?

We express our Missional priorities as:

**Worshipping Jesus**

**Growing Disciples**

**Journeying with the Curious**

Our Mission all flows from Worshipping Jesus. We want to be faithful followers of Jesus but we are primarily called to worship him as our Saviour, Lord and God.

Following this, we are committed to Growing Disciples. The language of 'growth' and other organic metaphors such as cultivating, nurturing, sowing etc. have become increasingly important to the developing culture here as we acknowledge that growth is something that God does. We can do our bit to nurture people's faith and walk with people on their journey, but we always want to make space for (and have faith for) the work of the Holy Spirit.

Finally, we have a heart to Journey with the Curious. From the moment we're born, we come into the world curious (and kids lead the way in this!) but as time goes on, we can either just naturally lose some of that curiosity or it gets 'squashed' because we fear asking silly questions or we've had experiences of not being listened to. The recent 'Quiet Revival' document indicated that there's a resurgence in faith-related curiosity and many people (particularly young adults) are coming back to the church with big questions. We feel called as a community to journey with the curious....with people that have open hearts and enquiring minds.

## The incumbent's and PCC's vision is:

That all in Evesham would:

know Jesus,  
discover purpose,  
be transformed.

That St Peter's would be a diverse community where:

all are loved,  
sanctuary is found,  
hope is restored.

by the power of the Holy Spirit,  
so that  
God may be glorified.



This vision was discerned over a number of months with the collaboration of a wide range of leaders from across the breadth of the church. There is wide-ranging support for this vision.

## How does the incumbent understand the role of training?



We don't underestimate the trust that has been placed in us as a context for training during curacy. People starting their curacies can come from a wide range of backgrounds with some people having had years of experience of ministry and mission under their belts already and others having had relatively little experience. Wherever people are coming from, our aim is to not only train them well for the demands of ordained ministry but also support them in their journey of formation, because the person they're becoming is a huge part of the work they're doing. To facilitate this, we're committed to high-quality regular supervision and time for regular theological reflection.

St Peter's offers a wide range of opportunities for a curate, with a good number of occasional offices to learn these 'bread and butter' skills. There's a wide range of ecclesial tradition here which gives curates opportunities to lead and preach at more conventional liturgical services whilst gaining experience of more informal, less structured and more creative and missional expressions of church.

We want to be a place where people can:

- Deepen their faith in Jesus
- try new things without fear of failure
- feel supported, stretched, and nurtured in working on their weaknesses
- be released in their natural gifts and calling



## What is the likely role of the curate in future plans?

The curate will be joining St Peter's staff team at a really exciting time! They will be a key member of the senior leadership team, working closely with the incumbent and sharing in the leadership, care, and development of the whole church. Beyond the curacy, future opportunities are always 'God willing' and will involve prayerful discernment, but Worcester Diocese is increasingly committed to Renewals and planting so potential curates should be open to this as a possible future direction.

## Areas of particular responsibility for curate in training:

Matching Curates with the right parish and training incumbent is always an exercise in mutual discernment, so whilst there are certain possibilities listed here, ultimately, we would want to listen to, and work with the new curate and find outlets for their God-given gifts and passion.

## Accommodation:

Suitable accommodation in line with the diocesan specification will be provided.

## Some possible areas of responsibility:

- Development of prayer spaces
- Oversight of Life Groups
- Development of the ARK project
- School Governance
- Oversight and co-ordination of pastoral care
- Development of Prayer Ministry
- Development of an evening gathering aimed at young people





## The process of formation, training and assessment in the Diocese of Worcester:

Curacy is, first and foremost, a period of formation and training undertaken for future ministry. Although a curacy is an opportunity for ministry in its own right, it is undertaken with a view to preparation for the future – regardless of whether the curate is non-stipendiary or stipendiary. This training is the shared responsibility of the curate, the training incumbent, and the IME 2 Officer. Primary resources for the successful outcome of this training are:

- 1. The curate** – who brings experience, professional life, Christian faith and recent training from theological course or college to the new ministry. He or she needs to be allowed and encouraged to bring all of this into ministry and continued training – alongside a willingness to learn.
- 2. The training incumbent** – who brings their own experience and needs to be able to share this, with vulnerability and responsibility, to help the curate find his or her own patterns of sustainable ministry.
- 3. The parish** – which should have its own sense of vocation to train and develop the ministry of the whole people of God, and will provide the primary context for feedback in the curate's early ministry.
- 4. The Formation Qualities and Assessment** – which are national guidelines setting out the aims for the curacy, for all partners in the training relationship to work towards.

## The Diocesan IME programme

The primary training context is the parish (in the case of MSE curates, additionally, in the workplace). However, the diocese provides additional training for all curates. This is generally held on seven Saturdays in the year, with a residential weekend in February.

All curates, stipendiary and non-stipendiary are expected to attend the IME days. There is also one additional evening session for new deacons, an additional evening session for new priests and a full day for curates in the third year looking to a post of responsibility beyond the curacy. It has proved a good idea to invite training incumbents to one IME session, and this happens from time to time.

## The Training Programme

The Diocesan element of IME Phase 2 is based on a three-year rolling programme of study days, taught across year groups. The themes of these study days are closely related to the Formation Qualities and seek to amplify and add depth to the curates' experience in their ministerial context. There is an annual residential weekend as well as a Quiet Day. All curates are assigned to a Theological Reflection small group that meets monthly. It is expected that Diocesan IME Study Days take precedence over parish commitments on the same day.

Stipendiary curates undertake two short placements while self-supporting curates undertake one. Curates are encouraged to undertake these placements in contexts which their training parish are unable to provide.

## EKM Exchange

The Diocese of Worcester has a partnership link with the Evangelische Kirche in Mitteldeutschland and as part of their curacy Worcester curates both to visit newly-ordained pastors in Germany and to learn something of the challenges of ministry there and to host them in Worcester.

## Who should be contacted in the first instance?

### Diocesan Director of Ordinands and Vocation

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