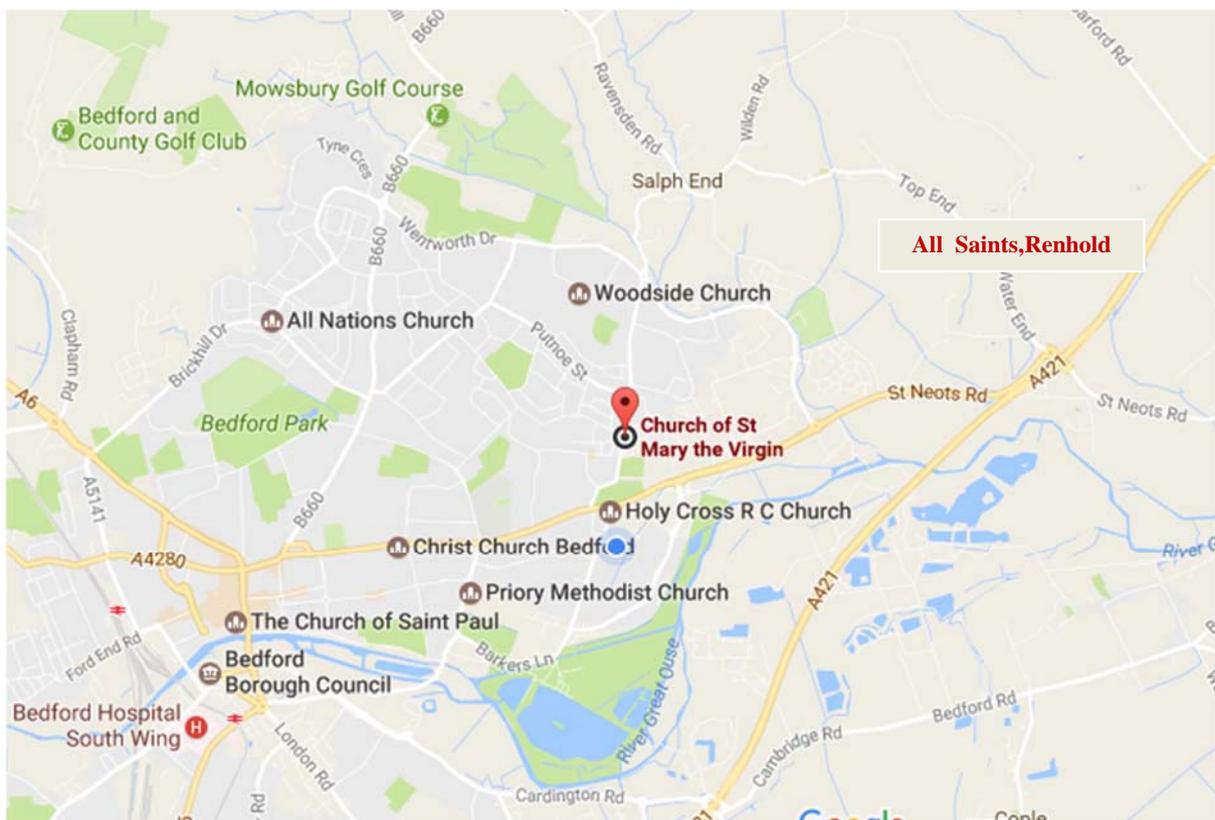


## The benefices of St Mary the Virgin, Goldington and All Saints, Renhold



We are two friendly and active Parish Churches coming together and seeking to appoint a full time priest in charge of both parishes. The Team Vicar will subsequently be involved in the recruitment of a half time priest colleague to focus their ministry on Renhold.

These adjoining parishes are in the Deanery of Bedford and Archdeaconry of Bedford and lie on the north east of Bedford. The parish of Goldington is within the Borough of Bedford and Renhold is a village parish but with some newly developed housing estates on the border between the two parishes.

We are looking for a priest who will:

- Enjoy working in welcoming and friendly churches.
- Want to work with two active, engaged, supportive and realistic PCCs and congregations.
- Enjoy the challenge of two diverse parishes that marry a beautiful Bedfordshire village with new housing developments and an established urban parish.
- Seek the breadth and variety of a full time post, overseeing two parishes.
- Lead us in prayer and worship to grow our faith and spirituality whilst valuing our diversity and changing society.
- Further our Mission and outreach in our changing and expanding community,
- Lead and empower us to realise our vision and embrace change.
- Relate well to all sections of this socially and culturally diverse community, including the young, the old and those who do not regularly attend church. A 'people's person'.
- The person appointed would need the gifts and ability to train a curate.
- Maintain the 'middle of the road' Anglican tradition of churchmanship in both churches.
- Will uphold and strengthen the current ecumenical links and develop multi-faith links within the increasingly diverse mix of faiths within the parishes.
- Will continue and develop the outreach to local schools and university and to all in the local community, especially those with young families.

# THE PARISH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN, GOLDINGTON

Church Lane, Goldington, BEDFORD, MK41 0AP

[www.stmarygoldington.org.uk](http://www.stmarygoldington.org.uk)

Office: 01234 328823

[office@stmarygoldington.org.uk](mailto:office@stmarygoldington.org.uk)

***Our vision is for St. Mary's to be a growing church, whose welcome, in Christ's name, extends to all.***

***Furthermore, that St. Mary's will express this in buildings that are well-used and open to the fullest extent, offering modern and traditional worship that meets the needs of people now, with an active social life for all age groups, nurturing people who know the power of Christ in their lives, and expressing our faith in God by service to our community and the wider world.***



**Population 18,000  
Electoral Roll 137**

## PARISH OVERVIEW

Until the 1930s, Goldington was a village parish. In 1934 it was incorporated into the Borough of Bedford and in the 1950s became a neighbourhood development area. At this time large housing estates were built to accommodate post-war expansion and the Church was significantly enlarged. Industrial estates were established in the 1970s and 80s. Major house building has now stopped in this parish but several new estates have been added in recent years on this north eastern edge of Bedford that are administratively in Renhold parish but adjoin Goldington.

Bedford is well situated with quick access to major motorways and a fast mainline train service to St. Albans and London. Bedford is becoming increasingly attractive to London business commuters and this is pushing up house prices as well as demand. The light-industrial estates and nearby retail parks provide employment but many residents also commute to Northampton, Milton Keynes or Cambridge.



*Map showing the parish boundaries for St Mary the Virgin, Goldington*

Housing is mixed and covers the whole range from social housing to owner-occupied properties of varying sizes, detached and semidetached. Goldington contains pockets of low-income areas with social problems. Bedford Pilgrims Housing Association (BPHA) is a significant supplier of social housing, as well as Aragon, Aldwyck, Jephson and Orbit housing associations.

Goldington is served by Bedford hospital as well as by local doctors' and dentists' surgeries and a local private therapy centre for chiropody and physiotherapy.

Aspects Leisure Centre in the parish provides a multi-screen cinema, a gym and fast-food outlets. A new entertainment and leisure complex is about to open in Bedford, a short bus ride away. There are several pubs as well as standard restaurant chains and hotels in the parish.

Goldington is exceptionally well served by shops and supermarkets including Aldi, Coop, Tesco, Waitrose and Iceland as well as DIY stores and a GO Outdoors.

Ethnically Goldington contains about the same mix as Bedford generally with Italian, Afro-Caribbean and Indian Subcontinent as origins, but now with a notable increase in immigrants from Poland and the Baltic States.

## **TRANSPORT**

There are good road links from Bedford to the M1 and the A428 Northampton to Cambridge road runs through the parish and links with the A1.

Good local bus services give easy access to the town centre and various parts of the parish, including supermarkets and DIY stores. The X5 long distance coach between Oxford and Cambridge stops at Goldington Green and connects with Milton Keynes and St Neots.

Bedford Railway Station is served by the Thameslink line from Bedford to Brighton and the East Midlands Line from St Pancras to Sheffield and Nottingham giving connections to the North of England and Scotland.

## **EDUCATION**

There are two lower schools, one Primary School, one Middle school and a Secondary school. Most of the schools in Bedford Borough are in the process of transferring from the current three tier system to a two -tier education system.



*Goldington Green Academy*

In recent years, local children have visited the Church in large numbers in Holy week for an 'Easter experience'. This has been well received. Groups from local schools also visit the church as part of their Religious Education and St Mary's Clergy are invited to take school assemblies at the local Primary schools.

An Open the Book Team visits Goldington Green Academy, weekly during term time and the last incumbent was a Governor at the school.

Some of the children in the parish attend one of the four Harpur Trust Schools in Bedford.

There is a campus of the University of Bedfordshire in the parish. Our present curate has been involved with chaplaincy at the university.

Bedford College, in the centre of Bedford, offers academic, vocational and professional qualifications for students from age to degree level.

The leaders of the Beaver and Guide groups that meet in the Church Hall are regular members of the congregation and the groups are invited to some of the special occasion services such as Harvest Festival and Remembrance Sunday.

## **LEISURE AND RECREATION**

There are a number of facilities for leisure activities within the parish. Priory Country Park together with Priory Marina which lie in a loop of the River Great Ouse offer sailing, water skiing, a canoe slalom course, bird watching and fishing as well as a cycle way and grassland areas ideal for dog walking. Close by these is Bedford International Athletic Stadium that as well as hosting national and international events offers a range of training sessions for track and indoor sports and exercise.

Bedford Cricket Ground is close by the Church and just to the south of this Goldington Green provides a wide grassy area much used by dog walkers and with outdoor play facilities for children of all ages.

Aspects Leisure Centre in the parish has a cinema, gym and a number of food outlets and there are several pubs, well known chain restaurants and hotels in the parish.

Putnoe Public Library is just over the Parish Boundary and on one of the local bus routes.

## ACCOMMODATION

The Vicarage is adjacent to the church. It is a four bedroom building constructed in the 1960s. The Vicarage has front and rear gardens, private parking, central heating and double glazing. Leading from the hall is a cloakroom and toilet, study, large lounge with connecting dining room, spacious kitchen with adjacent utility room. The bedrooms and bathroom plus toilet are located upstairs,



Access to the Vicarage and integral garage is by private roadway past the church and hall.

*The Vicarage from the back garden*

The Curate's house (1 Atholl Walk) is a fairly modern end of terrace house comprising kitchen, dining room, utility room, lounge, ground floor toilet, rear conservatory, 3 bedrooms, bathroom and toilet, garage and rear garden.

## WORSHIP

Both the Book of Common Prayer and Common worship are used for the Sunday and mid-week services. These are supplemented by other resources for the informal monthly Family Praise service and on other special occasions and festivals.

### *Pattern of Sunday Worship*

8.00 am	Holy Communion (said)	B.C.P.	[11]♦♦
9.30 am	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday Family Worship (may include Baptism)	Own booklet	[65+]
	2 <sup>nd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> weeks Parish Communion	C.W.	[94]
	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday Family Communion (may include Baptism)	CW	[90+]
5.00 pm monthly (except winter months and August)	Evensong (sung)	B.C.P.	[20]

### *Weekday Services*

9.00 am daily	Morning Prayer	CW	[2-6]
10am Wednesday	Holy Communion	BCP	[22]

♦♦ [ ] The numbers in brackets are representative of regular services

Attendance at the 2 services last Easter was 153 in total. Over the Christmas season there were 24 children at both the Christingle and Nativity services and an average of 74 adults. The 3 Christmas Communion services had a total of 162 adults.

The age range of the congregation is very wide but with the majority over retirement age. Currently there is no Sunday School but there is a children's corner at the back of the church for young children.

*Numbers of Occasional Offices during the year*

Baptisms	19
Weddings	10
Funerals	16 in Church and 21 at the Crematorium

There is considerable lay participation in the regular services, reading lessons, leading intercessions, assisting with administration of the Sacrament and there are teams of Servers. We are also fortunate to have two trained Lay Leaders who assist especially at the Family Worship service and there is a signing group.



Various Special services are held throughout the year such as a Service of thanksgiving and Remembrance for the departed, an outdoor Pet's Service, Taizé and Iona style evening services and Compline in Holy Week.



*Pet's service 2016*

There is a strong musical tradition at St Mary's with a dedicated SATB choir affiliated to the Royal School of Church Music. The choir sings for the main Parish and Family Communion services and monthly Evensong on Sundays and special festivals and services such as Ascension Day and Maundy Thursday.

It will also sing as required for weddings and funerals. There is a separate group of singers which accompanies the family worship service with piano and percussion accompaniment.



*Carol Service 2016*

St Mary's is a traditional "middle of the road" Church; vestments are worn at all the main services and the choir is robed.

The sacrament is reserved for sick and home communions.

The PCC approved the Incumbent officiating at marriage services of those who have been previously married with a partner still living.

## **PASTORAL AND ECUMENICAL**

### **Pastoral**

The pastoral work of the parish is well supported and there is a lay led Pastoral Care Team.

A lay group leads the St Mary's Hospital Chapel team which, once a month, is involved in the Sunday services at Bedford Hospital.

Monthly Communion is taken by members of the Ministry Team to those who are house bound.

There are two house groups in operation. The Prayer Fellowship is currently reviewing its structure with the hope of becoming a new house group.

There is a Sunday Evening Prayer group which meets in the church to pray specifically for the needs of the parish.

### **Ecumenical**

St Mary's is the only Anglican Church in Goldington. Priory Methodist Church and the Roman Catholic Church of Holy Cross are our neighbours in the parish and the three churches signed an ecumenical covenant in 2000 that is renewed annually as Goldington Churches Together (GCT). This has strengthened and formalised ties between them. A range of activities including Lent Groups, Pulpit Exchanges, Carol Singing to raise funds for a local homeless charity and an annual Away Day and Acts of Worship are co-ordinated by the Goldington Churches Together Planning Group.

One of the Bedford Food Banks runs from St Mary's on Wednesday afternoons with volunteer helpers from all three churches.

For many years the three churches of Holy Cross, Priory and St Mary's have worked together in partnership. Since 2000 they entered into a covenant agreement. This has strengthened and formalised ties between them.

Hope Church is an independent Church meeting weekly in a local school. Although there is no formal agreement, it joins in the Ministers' Fraternal and sing carols with us at Tesco at Christmas. Together with the other Goldington churches we send Easter and Christmas cards to the detainees at the Yarls Wood detention centre.

St Mary's is involved in 'All Bedford Churches Together'. The Churches organise a series of services in the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity which members of St Mary's attend. The annual 'Women's World Day of Prayer' has 2 services in a range of denominational churches and is fully supported by the Church.

There are other places of worship within the parish including Woodside Christian Centre, a Jehovah's Witness Kingdom Hall and an Exclusive Brethren Meeting Place.

## **LEADERSHIP**

The Staff Team meets each week to deal with routine worship and pastoral matters. Besides the inevitable involvement in administrative concerns, the wardens see that encouraging lay involvement is important in the life of the church.

The PCC currently has nineteen members of whom fourteen are elected and five are *ex officio*. It meets nine times a year. In addition to the Standing Committee there are several committees paying particular attention to Pastoral Matters, Worship, and Property. These contain some co-opted non-PCC members. From time to time *ad hoc* working groups may be formed for a particular task.

## **MINISTERIAL TEAM**

The ministerial team consists of:-

Vicar (vacant post)

Priested Curate (who completes training in June)

Licensed Readers (2)

Reader in Training (2nd year)

The Staff Team – the Ministerial Team plus Church Wardens and one ex-DLM which currently meets each week together with the Parish Administrator.

## **GROUPS AND ACTIVITIES**

Nearly all the active groups at St Mary's are open to all and some such as the Women's Fellowship, Carpet Bowls and Knit and Natter have a number of members who are not regular worshippers at St Mary's. This means they are a point of contact with the local community.

The following are associated with worship and with the upkeep of St Mary's:

Bell Ringers, Choir, Signing Group, Welcome Teams, Servers, Chalice Assistants, Flower Arrangers, Lesson Readers, Transport Co-ordinator and Brass Cleaners.

Other groups and activities include:

Catering Team, Library, Card-stall, Magazine editorial team, Women's and Men's breakfast groups that meet at local restaurants and the two house groups, one meeting fortnightly and the other monthly.



Various other church and community groups including a Pre-school use the Church Hall premises. These include Carpet Bowls and Knit and Natter that meet weekly and St Mary's Women's Fellowship that meets twice a month.

St Mary's Walking Group focuses on local walks that are not too arduous and takes place approximately monthly.

The Church Office and Archive Management are currently both managed by the Parish Administrator. The Church Office is open three mornings a week.

The Church Library is a collection of books of a religious nature available to borrow.

The Hospital Chapel Team is involved in the Sunday service at Bedford Hospital each month.

Sunday Stalls selling Fair Trade goods, Greetings Cards and Calendars are held in the Church Hall during the refreshment time following the 9.30am Sunday Service.



*Traidcraft Stall*



*Autumn Fair*

Various other social events take place throughout the year. These include Church Fetes and Fairs, Parish Lunches at Christmas and Harvest, and charity social events such as afternoon tea and Quiz.

## **BUILDINGS**

The PCC and Property Committee are in charge of all maintenance and are fully involved in upkeep within the buildings and in the churchyard and grounds. The churchyard is closed and maintained by the local authority but there are three areas where ashes can be interred.

**St Mary's church** is a mostly fifteenth century structure with a twentieth century extension which doubled the size of the building and now provides the main nave and sanctuary. There has probably been a church on the site since the twelfth century and some stonework dates back to the thirteenth century. There are several wall and floor memorials including two sixteenth century brasses. The tower holds a peal of six bells, the earliest of which are dated 1600.



*The Lady Chapel*

The Church building is in generally very good repair. The Quinquennial report in 2014 showed a number of works to do over the next five years, at an estimated cost of about £15-20,000 in total. We have recently fitted a high-quality oak servery and cupboards under the inside of the tower.



*New Servedy and  
cupboards*

Our next proposed projects are:

A glazed Oak door to the South Porch replacing a metal gate. This work is underway.

Refurbishment of the Memorial chapel, also underway.

Modernising the Church toilet area.

Enlargement of the choir vestry.

Creation of a publicity/rest area.

Creation of an older children's area at the rear of the new part of the building.

**The Church Hall**, located within the precinct and built in the 1960s, comprises a main hall, small extension hall and the Dilworth Room used as a small committee room and office. The building and facilities are up to date. It has a re-furbished kitchen, toilets, including new facilities for those with disabilities, and a baby-changing area. The hall building is used extensively throughout the week by local Pre-school, Guide and Beaver groups and various outside interest groups as well as for church groups and activities and refreshments after the main Sunday service.

**Carpark.** A tarmac covered marked area with disabled spaces between Church and hall is maintained by the Property Committee.

## **FINANCE**

The 2016 accounts showed that total income was £134,000 of which £45,000 came from donors, £10,000 from tax claims, £12,000 from donations and legacies and £20,000 from hall hire.

Expenditure was £140,000 in 2016 (this included £25,000 on the serving project). The parish share was £48,000.

The parish has met its parish share in full for at least the last 40 years.

Christian Stewardship is practised through an envelope scheme together, where possible, with payments through standing orders. Gift Aid is recovered where possible. The PCC has agreed to donate 5% of annual church income to Overseas Mission and Charity.

## **EXPENSES OF OFFICE**

The incumbent's expenses are met in full.

General parish administration is covered by a parish administrator who usually works three mornings a week with some help from volunteers who assist with various tasks.

## SUPPORT FOR MISSION AND CHARITIES



*Our Mission Partner*

St Mary's is currently supporting a CMS Mission Partner, Heather Johnston, who is in charge of the Rehema Project in Musoma, Kenya. This supports disadvantaged women and children by providing employment in their Craft Workshop and Café. Direct Financial support is given by the PCC from the general church income but also some of the cards and craft items made in the workshop are sold on our monthly Traidcraft Stall.

News of Heather is posted on a church notice board and in the monthly magazine so we can support her also with meaningful prayer.

Christian Aid Week is supported through a number of different fund raising activities. For example, during Lent weekly 'Hunger Lunches' are held in a parishioner's house with a simple lunch of soup, rolls and fruit for which a donation is made. Coffee mornings, afternoon tea and Quiz and Loose Change Jars are other ways money is raised. A few people also do the House to House envelope Collection during the Week but with an aging congregation this is no longer the main focus.

The Bishop's Harvest for the Hungry Appeal is always supported through the collections at the Harvest Festival services and donated food from the Harvest Festival is taken to a local Hospice and a charity for the Homeless.

A number of local social and medical charities are supported by donating the money from all the Christmas collections. We also give gifts in kind to the local Family Centre and host its Carol service and clothing and food is donated to a centre for the homeless.

## COMMUNICATION

The church publishes a monthly magazine 'Parish & People' which is available by subscription and in church. Complimentary copies are distributed to local surgeries and hotels.

A weekly notice sheet is provided in church and this, the magazine, hymnbooks and main service books are always available in large-print versions on request. There is also a sound reinforcement system and a T-loop.

The wider parish receives handbills promoting events on an occasional basis and posters and flyers are distributed to local outlets such as shops, library, schools etc. for display for major events.

The church also uses digital media having its own Facebook page and church website at [www.stmarygoldington.org.uk](http://www.stmarygoldington.org.uk). The website contains information about all parish activities, events and services and contacts and is regularly updated. Extracts from *Parish & People* and the weekly notice sheet are always available and provide access to information for those who may not be able to get to church.

All areas of our publicity are constantly reviewed and rebuilding the website to meet current needs is one area under consideration. We are fully aware that 'publicity' is not synonymous with 'communication' and more needs to be done to ensure that what we have on offer reaches the wider parish

## **STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

We see our strengths to lie in our committed core of active parishioners and steady and harmonious congregation who back an active PCC, substantial in number and with strong sub-committees including both council and non-council members. Our members are financially generous and we pay our Parish Share in full.

We are proud of our choir and have good teams of bell-ringers, servers and welcomers. We have a variety of different services to suit a range of different needs.

Our Church Hall is large, modern and well-maintained and widely used by a local pre-school and range of community groups as well as church organisations

Our weakness lies in the increasing age of the main congregation and there are areas that needed developing. We are fortunate to already have some lay ministry but this could be developed. Within the church a better display area is much needed and a space for quiet prayer or conversation.

Our community and ecumenical links need strengthening and developing and both of these would be helped by increased social activities and improved communications and publicity to reach the wider population of the parish. Linked to this is a need to develop the ministry to children, meeting them where they are rather than waiting for them to come to us.

## **Our Mission Action Plans**

In 2012 the congregation identified 3 priorities in its Mission Action Plan:

1. To make more of our Worship attractive to families including those of little church background.
2. To 'open up' St Mary's to the local community, to offer support and pastoral care, so that more 'come in' and more 'get out' into the local community.
3. To develop what is on offer at St Mary's so we can increase the church family to attract and retain new people.

Since the parish launch meeting in 2012, much has been developed and achieved: including the development of more family friendly liturgy, the opening up of the Food Bank, the work on turning Golden Gardens into a lovely new community resource and the development of a new servery areas in the West End of the Church. Through a variety of activities we have opened up our church to local schools and uniformed groups and the curate has put on 'Film and Theology' evenings at his house to draw in a range of people.

The diocese is renewing the Living God's Love initiative and it would seem the right time to review our Mission Action Plan.

# The Parish of All Saints, Renhold

## *A growing Parish where town meets country*

*We aspire and pray that we will be.....*

A welcoming, open, inclusive and growing church where everyone can find friendship, fellowship, love and acceptance within a secure and supportive environment, regardless of faith, ethnicity or background

A place where we can question and explore our faith and so grow in love and understanding such that we may look to the future together with confidence

Regarded throughout the Ecclesiastical Parish by young and old, as an integral part of the community and whose mission extends beyond the confines of our Church Walls

### **Mission Action Plan 2016**

#### **Our priorities**

- To continue to grow our faith and spirituality
- To serve the whole community throughout old and new Renhold
- To be effective and efficient custodians of our funds, fabric and members of our church family to ensure our sustainable future

#### **In the light of these priorities our goals for the 2016-17 are:**

- To recruit a Priest to inspire, lead and encourage us
- To maintain a regular and varied schedule of services throughout the vacancy, including major festivals and celebrations, with something for everyone
- To develop a growing church with ever greater involvement of our Church family in lay mission and ministry, supported in their work through open access to *Living Gods love* and *Equipping Gods People* courses, our lending library and congregation
- To evolve our mission and outreach in a growing and increasingly diverse community including our School and Care Homes
- A continued focus on financial stewardship and fundraising with continued investment in our Fabric and continued full payment of our Parish Share



*The Church of All Saints and its congregation warmly welcome everyone, whatever their background, to join us in our Mission and Ministry and draw strength from the Holy Spirit within this blessed setting.*

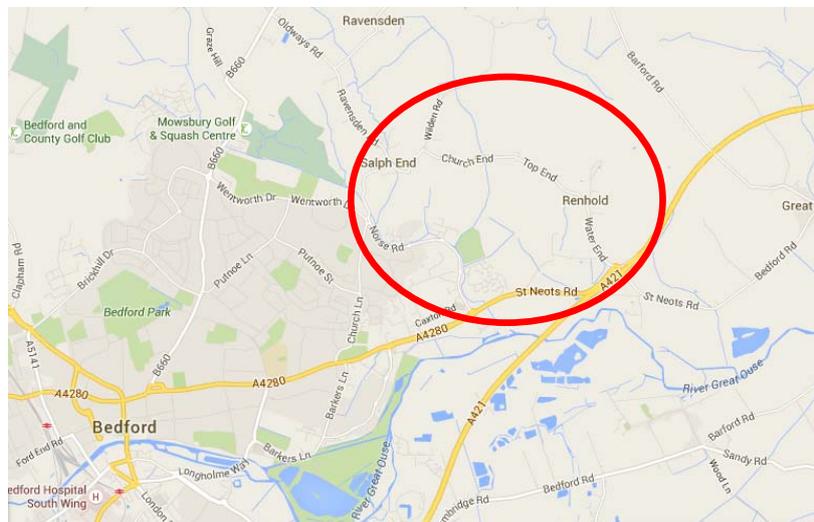
**Population: 3000**  
**Electoral Roll: 56**

## PARISH OVERVIEW

The Benefice of All Saints, Renhold is situated on the edge of the Deanery to the North East of Bedford Borough, its southern boundary being the River Ouse. The Parish Church is situated in the centre of the village. With lovely brown cobbled walls and surrounded by open countryside it has served its Parishioner's for over 800 years.

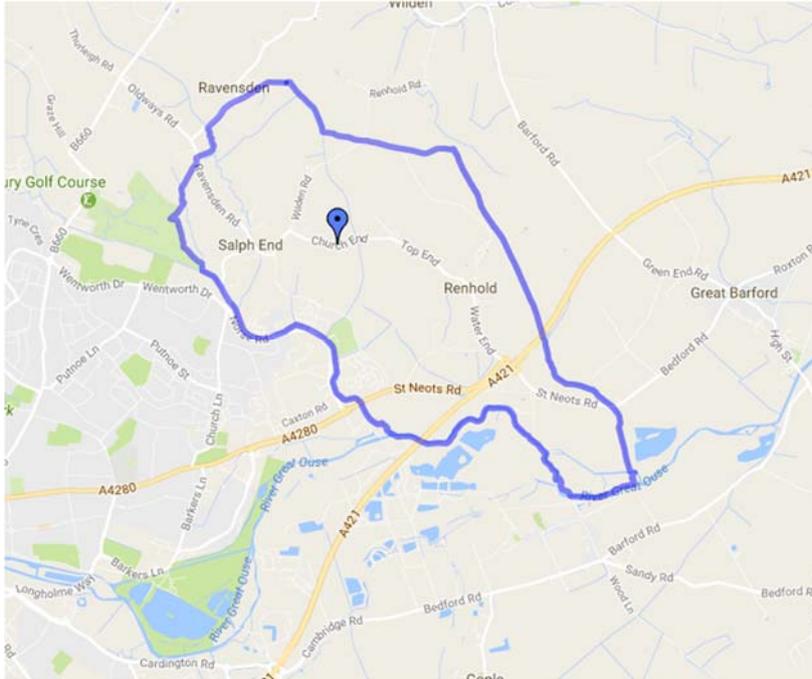
The Parish consists of two distinctly different area's; the "old" village which comprises several hamlets and in contrast three comparatively recent estates. The first of the three was established some 15 years ago and the two newer ones are still being developed. Approximately 80% of the Parish is countryside comprising arable farming or grassland.

The population of the two areas are quite different with variance in age, ethnicity, culture and wealth. In recent years, the old and new Parish has become more integrated and physically linked by safe pathways, although not quite "married" together both play a full and active part within the village and Church.



In addition to the Church, there is an Independent Baptist Chapel, Church of England Lower School, New Village Hall, Sports Ground with Sports Clubs, Village Post Office and Shop and a Pub. Renhold has a Parish Council, which administers many of the Village policies and is well represented by members from across the different areas.

The village has its own Website ([Renholdbeds.net](http://Renholdbeds.net)), FB Page and Magazine, the latter of which is put together each month in the Chapter House at the Church.



Renhold Parish  
Boundaries

## TRANSPORT

Renhold lies some three miles from the Centre of Bedford and is connected to the town by regular bus services. Bedford is approximately 50 miles North of London and 30 miles to the west of Cambridge. There are excellent and easy links to the A1 and M1. The main line station offers access to London within 45 mins.

## EDUCATION



The Parish hosts a number of early year's facilities including a Children's Day Centre and Nursery that takes charges from 4 months. The village school, Renhold VC Lower and Pre-school, has strong association with the Church as well as the Diocese. The PCC is represented on its Governing body and the Children have a special service in the Church each term, often accompanied by parents and grandparents.

Older Children generally move on to the Alban Academy C of E Middle School in nearby Great Barford and later Mark Rutherford in Bedford. The town and nearby Kimbolton also have a large number of Independent schools, a Sixth Form College and the University of Bedfordshire has a Campus in the centre.



## LEISURE AND RECREATION

The village lies amongst acres of countryside that gives rise to some excellent walks and cycle ways. Cycle Route 51 stretches from Sandy to Milton Keynes and runs parallel to the Ouse through the edge of the Parish. The Village Hall and Church host a number of clubs and societies for all ages as well as various events throughout the year. There is a sports ground which is home to Renhold Football Club. The village has one Pub, highly praised in the good beer guide. The village hall is also widely used for receptions following baptisms, weddings and funerals. The church holds some larger social events at the hall when the Chapter House isn't big enough.

A wider range of further activities can be found in Bedford. For the active there are Swimming Pools, Gyms, Running, Squash and Tennis Clubs, Golf Courses as well as Bedford Blues RFC. Culturally there are two Art Galleries, a Theatre, a multi-screen Cinema and a variety of events at the Corn Exchange. The town also hosts a range of Pubs, night clubs and restaurants. One of Bedford's greatest landmarks is the embankment along the River Ouse which hosts a number of annual Regatta's and one of the UKs largest River Festivals every other year.

## WORSHIP

A range of services and styles of worship are offered at Renhold. Routinely, there are four principle services which form the backbone of our worship:

- Each week the main Sunday service is a sung Eucharist following Common Worship (Contemporary); Every third Sunday the service is a more relaxed all age Worship service
- Each Wednesday morning there is a said Holy Communion which uses Traditional worship
- On every second Sunday there is a sung Evensong with Sermon followed by a said communion (Traditional). On the other Sunday's there is a sung Evensong with Sermon. During winter months Evensong is held at 4.00pm and at 6.00pm during the summer months ( British winter and summer time is used for the change in time)
- On the first Sunday of each month there is an additional early said Communion (Traditional).

During the vacancy the following services are being held:-

- A sung Eucharist each Sunday
- A said Holy Communion each Wednesday
- A sung Evensong every second Sunday of the month

Additionally Festivals and Seasonal Services are observed including Compline and Stations of the Cross during Lent, Harvest Thanksgiving, Remembrance Sunday, a Christingle Service, a family Crib Service, an annual Service to remember the faithful departed and an open air Songs of Praise.

Each month Holy Communion is also conducted at Crossways Care Home and Little Paddocks Community Home in Renhold. (Suspended during the Vacancy)

Lay people of all ages take an active part in the worship serving, reading, leading the intercessions, distribution of the elements, etc.



The Church was full for the Crib Service on Christmas Eve 2015 with 28 taking Communion from a total of 30 at the Midnight Service.

Communicants on Easter day 2016 were 31 with a total of 33 attending worship.

The occasional Offices are an important part of pastoral care and outreach and in 2015 there were 4 Baptisms, 1 Confirmation, 10 Weddings and 19 Funerals or burials of Ashes in addition to 7 Services at the Crematorium.

Attendance on an average Sunday is 25.

The churchyard is open but is almost full.

## **PASTORAL AND ECUMENICAL**

In addition to the needs of our immediate church family there are many opportunities for pastoral work amongst the community particularly through work with School and Care homes. A number of members of the Church have attended courses in the last 12 months under the umbrella of Living Gods Love and Equipping Gods People to support them in mission and ministry.

The Congregation of All Saints and the Local Baptist Chapel have an annual united village service and Members of the Chapel join us for the Christmas Carol Service.

The congregation support the homeless of Bedford by collecting food for the Prebend Day Centre each month.

The previous incumbent and the Church Wardens have a good relationship with St Mary's, Goldington and with St Andrew's, Bedford. The clergy from both churches are officiating at a number of weddings during the vacancy.

## LEADERSHIP

The Parochial Church Council consists of 8 members plus the future incumbent. This includes those there by virtue of the office that they hold (Churchwardens and Deanery Synod Representatives). The PCC meets 8-10 times per year, routinely on a Saturday when we begin by having breakfast together. Three additional committees meet separately between these meetings to support Church affairs namely the Standing Committee and Fabric and Events Committees. In addition there is a Junior Church Leader, Child Welfare Officer, Electoral Roll Officer and Grants Officer.

The PCC are highly committed to the support of the Church Wardens and future incumbent. We aim to create a team environment where we are guided through prayer, open, flexible, and supportive, with a "can do" attitude (and where we have some fun!).

The Churchwardens' act as the primary contact for the people and Parish of Renhold and those further afield. They manage most of the logistics around the day to day running of the Church, its fabric and Churchyard, as well as arranging Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals. During the Vacancy, in line with the MAP, priorities include ensuring that weekly Sunday and Wednesday services are covered with an Ordained Priest to preside over the Eucharist and ensuring that the Parish are kept informed about relevant matters arising.

The Friends' of All Saint's are a small group of Trustees who meet throughout the year focusing on Fund Raising events to raise money for the Church. There are 3 Concerts planned, the first being on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> June plus a Beetle Drive in September.

## MINISTERIAL TEAM

There is one Lay Reader who takes Evensong and if required Morning Prayer on a Wednesday in place of Holy Communion.

## GROUPS & ACTIVITIES

A number of groups and activities are initiated from the Church:

**Junior Church** holds a number of activities and services for the younger members of our congregation during the year

**A Lent Group** meets weekly for study and reflection ahead of Easter.

**Bell Ringers** practice each Tuesday and ring regularly for Sunday Services, Weddings and other celebrations

**Confirmation Classes** are held periodically providing youngsters and adults with an opportunity to explore their faith and prepare for Confirmation

**Steeple Drives** take place on a monthly basis

**The Stitches Group** meets to take part in a variety of handicrafts. The group is most generous in frequently selling the items they make to raise money for the Church

**The "Pudding Club"** for Carer provides informal, unpaid mutual support for many in our community who find them self in this position. In the last 8 years since it started over 40 people have attended for an average of 9 sessions

**The Village Magazine** is assembled on the last Tuesday of the month in the Chapter House, the group who do this are a mix of churchgoers and non churchgoers, it is an industrious but very social gathering.

**Various Events** including Musical Concerts, Fetes, Christmas Market, Beetle Drives.

## BUILDINGS

The Parish are privileged to worship in a most beautiful ancient church with a history spanning over 800 years. The building is a Grade 1 listed Church and consists of the Chancel and Nave, the Reaper Chapel and a Square Tower containing 5 bells.

In 1985 the Chapter House was added and linked via a corridor which includes disabled facilities and access to a small kitchen.

The church is open to all visitors during day light hours thanks to the help of a team of people who lock and unlock each day. We are blessed with good neighbours who allow their land to be used for Parking at peak times.



At the start of 2016, the Church was left a very significant legacy in excess of £86,000 that was restricted for use on the restoration of the church and this will be used to address items of repair and conservation outlined in the Quinquennial report (2013). The Church was broadly found to be in good order, the main concern being the condition of some of the gravestones in the church yard. Several of the taller stones have been laid down for safety reasons. The church holds a number of trusts for the upkeep of the church yard and gravestones.

Work to repair a small leak in the roof that developed over the winter is already underway. In addition the PCC have endorsed a project to replace the Disabled Access ramps with a more robust version suitable for electric and larger wheel chairs.

In the last few years the Fabric Committee and Grants Officer have worked hard to raise the money and undertake a number of improvements to both the Chapter House and Church, most recently these include improvements to the hot water system, Disabled Toilets and the Baby Changing Facilities to ensure the church remains welcoming and accessible to all.

Members of the congregation and broader community, team up three times a year to tidy up the Church yard. Church goers and non-church goers frequently rally round to help with a wide range of jobs, cleaning duties and flower arranging.

## FINANCE

Income £47182

Payments £44969

The Parish share was £26089 and paid in full.

The PCC have focused on strong financial Stewardship and Fundraising to secure our future and ability to investment in our Church. The congregation continue to make regular offerings through both standing orders and envelopes. In 2016, we were able to recover £5,294 in gift aid. The high number of Weddings and Funerals has significantly increased our earnings and our Grants officer has worked hard to secure Grants for a number of projects.

Periodically we donate a proportion of our collection to other causes e.g.at Harvest Thanksgiving and the Carol Service. Each Sunday we have a retiring collection for a variety of different Charities and Missions.

## EXPENSES OF OFFICE

Expenses of Office are reimbursed in full and there is limited provision for secretarial support.

## COMMUNICATION

The Parish has a monthly magazine which is distributed to the whole Parish. Each edition has a "Vicars slot" as well as carrying news and information about activities, events and services throughout the Village. Renhold has a website and Facebook page.

Posters are regularly displayed on notice boards around the village about Church Services and Events, including the new housing developments. Dates for your diary leaflets are distributed to the congregation approx once per quarter and a variety of leaflets have been created with information on giving and legacies, hiring the Chapter House, the history of the church and community support. The Church has its own website accessible directly or through the Village Website.

## STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Our prayerfulness and spirituality</p> <p>Dedicated faithful congregation</p> <p>Strong and cohesive PCC</p> <p>Parishioners and visitors reflect that we are a welcoming church and that Renhold is a community they want to be a part of</p> <p>Successful School and Special services that attract the wider community to the Church</p> <p>We are a very giving church e.g. foodbank</p> <p>Strong financial stewardship and deep pockets mean that we pay our Parish Share in full</p> <p>Our beautiful Church and buildings</p>	<p>The average age of the regular congregation is rising and younger people do not frequently come to church</p> <p>Parishioners from the newly developed areas of the village are not regular members of the congregation</p> <p>We do not currently have a clear understanding and direction on how to most effectively engage with a changing society</p> <p>Parish of two halves on many levels – old and new Renhold</p> <p>Limited resources/people to draw upon</p>

