

The Parish of St Paul Woodford Bridge



Parish Profile 2023

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The Diocese: A Message from Bishop Guli

Covering Essex and East London, Chelmsford is one of the largest, most diverse and exciting dioceses in the Church of England. We are home to more than 3 million people representing almost all socio-economic, ethnic and faith groups and a fantastic variety of cultures and traditions.

Our mission is to be a transforming presence in every community, open and welcoming to everyone and living out God’s love for all people.

In the short time since I have been Diocesan Bishop, from March 2021, I have witnessed people’s great warmth and heard stories about the wonderful things going on in our parishes.

We are looking for priests who are excited about our mission and excited about leading church communities; communities that are demonstrating the love of Christ in word and action, looking outwards to the needs of the world and sharing the good news of the gospel.

Of course, like many dioceses in the Church of England we face significant challenges. The decrease in national subsidy that helps us to pay clergy stipends has left us with a significant annual deficit that we must deal with. At the same time, we have a large number of vacant clergy posts that we have struggled to fill. Across the Church of England, church attendance has been in decline as has financial giving. In Essex and East London we also have some of the largest areas of population growth in the country where our challenge is to establish new and vibrant Christian communities. And of course, we do not yet fully understand the long-term impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic.

For these reasons and others, I sense the whole Church of God is at this current time in a liminal season when we cannot clearly see the future and we don’t quite know what it will look like. It is in this context that I am starting my ministry as Bishop of Chelmsford. My plan is to listen, learn and discern with others what the best way forward is for our Church. To ensure that we build on the great work that is taking place in many of our churches and worshipping communities and to enable us to change and adapt where we need to. I do so in the knowledge that the Church has faced profound challenges in the past and I do so with faith that when we open ourselves up to being changed and transformed, we are best placed to serve God and God’s people.

Any new priest joining us in the Diocese of Chelmsford does so at a time of challenge, a time of change and most significantly a time of hope for our Church in this most diverse and exciting of dioceses.

+Guli

Bishop of Chelmsford



St Paul’s, Woodford Bridge.

We are a small parish on the eastern edge of London close to the border with Essex, at the heart of which is our friendly, welcoming, family Church. We are seeking a Priest who will contribute to our mission through inspirational leadership and appreciation of an active Church community, and who will encourage and develop variety in worship and further our work with families and young people.

St Paul’s Woodford Bridge exists to worship God, lead people to Christ, build a loving Christian community, and serve a world in need.

Our strengths

- The differing styles of our dedicated ministry team of two permission to officiate Ministers (PTO) curates, a licensed lay minister and a pastoral assistant/locally authorised preacher.
- Our energy and enthusiasm for bringing our love of Jesus into the community.
- The striking location of the Church within the parish making it well situated for offering appropriate occasional offices to the wider community.
- Our generosity of time, talents and gifts, and of charitable works both locally and wider afield.
- Our warmth of welcome, fellowship and family atmosphere which has led to a growing multi-ethnic church with a lowering age demographic.
- A “broad evangelical” church in worship practices committed to retaining the diversity of approach at present enjoyed.
- The strong Christian fellowship amongst our committed congregation.

Our challenges

- To provide stimulus for those new to the church through encouragement, teaching, prayer and variety in Sunday services, and fellowship groups.
- To nurture and develop the contact made through occasional offices, especially weddings and baptisms.
- To recognise the importance of liturgy to worship, whilst developing more variety in worship especially for young families and children.
- To make the Parochial Church Council (PCC) more representative of the changing demographics of the congregation.
- To unite in the pursuit of our vision for the parish by inspired, dynamic leadership sympathetic to the needs of both Church and parish communities.

We see opportunities in

- Our local schools; with couples joining us for weddings and baptisms; the potential for parish mail-shots – 2,500 houses.
- 200 family homes are built on land immediately adjacent to our parish and people worship with us occasionally.
- A proposed care home on the existing Guide Dogs site adds further to expansion opportunities.



Our Priest

Faith & Spiritual Life

We are looking for someone who will:

- Set an example of personal faith by prayer and study.
- Be committed to the traditions of the Church of England.
- Promote and uphold Christian values in family life.
- Have a warm and caring personality with a humble confidence.
- Show evidence of the ‘Fruits of the Spirit’.
- Be a “broad church” evangelist, passionate in their love for God and all His people, with a wide variety of approaches and responses.
- Continue to support and further develop lay ministry within the Services and life of our church including all aspects of the parish.
- Have some experience of the secular world.

Skills

We are looking for someone who can present evidence of being:

- A manager, enabler and co-ordinator able to both develop team leaders and delegate.
- A listener.
- Able to relate to all ages, including children.
- Able to develop a long-term vision for the growth and future of our church.
- Approachable and able to develop relationships.
- Able to see what is available and present and, led by the Holy Spirit, take our parish forward.
- Able to develop the potential for growth and change.
- Aware of their own limitations.
- A keen visitor within the congregation and parish.

Actions

We are looking for someone who will:

- Make the love of God in Jesus clear in relevant contexts.
- Preach the relevance of the Bible to the individual and society today.
- Teach and preach to enable the growth of Christians in the parish.



St Paul’s Church & Its People

Our Spiritual Priorities

- To proclaim Christ as Lord and Saviour.
- To preach the relevance of the Bible in the life of individuals and society.
- To reach out more effectively into a community which is not anti-Church but is still largely ignorant of why the Church exists.
- To enable people to grow in the Spirit.
- To improve our outreach.

Our Worship

- Worship is ‘broad evangelical Church’ Anglican, embracing traditional and modern forms of worship. We have a shared ministry with full Lay participation in many aspects of worship and leadership.
- The PCC, in 1994, passed a resolution to accept the Ministry of Women, having declined to pass Resolutions A or B.
- We are seen as a very friendly and welcoming Church with people of widely different traditions feeling at home with us.



Our Services

Sundays 10:00 hrs



This service is usually Holy Communion plus Sunday Church club for children aged 3 years and older. Our average attendance is in excess of 60 in Church. Between 10 and 15 children, together with adult supervision, attend the Sunday Church club held in the Church Hall, joining the Church congregation towards the end of the service.

Our Church services are displayed to the congregation using screens via a laptop with a PowerPoint presentation.

Lectern, lapel and handheld microphones are used to ensure that all members of the congregation can hear the proceedings, including the use of an induction loop for hearing aids.

Wednesdays 10:30 hrs Holy Communion on the first and third Wednesday of each month (average attendance is small)

Occasional Services during the last year

Weddings	3
Marriage Blessings	2
Baptisms	11
Burial of Ashes	12
Funerals in Church	1
Funerals at a Crematorium	4



Our Organisations

- One Fellowship House Group.
- Mothers’ Union.
- Annual Children’s Holiday Club, together with half term meetings for one morning.
- Sunday Church club for children of 3 years and over.
- Nicola’s school of Dance use the Church hall regularly and contribute to some family Services.
- Marriage Preparation Team.
- Guides and Brownies use our Church hall.
- Textile Group of Church members.
- Coffee mornings once a week on Thursday.
- Lent lunches during Lent.
- Shoebox service.
- Memorial services.

Our Links

- There is a training centre for guide dogs for the blind.
- There is a Roman Catholic Convent adjacent to our parish.
- Woodford Fellowship of Christian Churches.
- The Lighthouse Church, meeting in our church on Sunday afternoons and some evenings during the week.

Our Finances

A pledged Gift Aid scheme is in operation, along with the usual collection arrangements including a card reader.

We have an Easy Fundraising account, and this is used by some members of the congregation to make donations while shopping online.

We hold two things to be of great importance in our financial arrangements:

- (i) that we have always paid our full Parish Quota or Share within the required year.
- (ii) that we plan our resources to be able to give 20% each year to charitable causes.

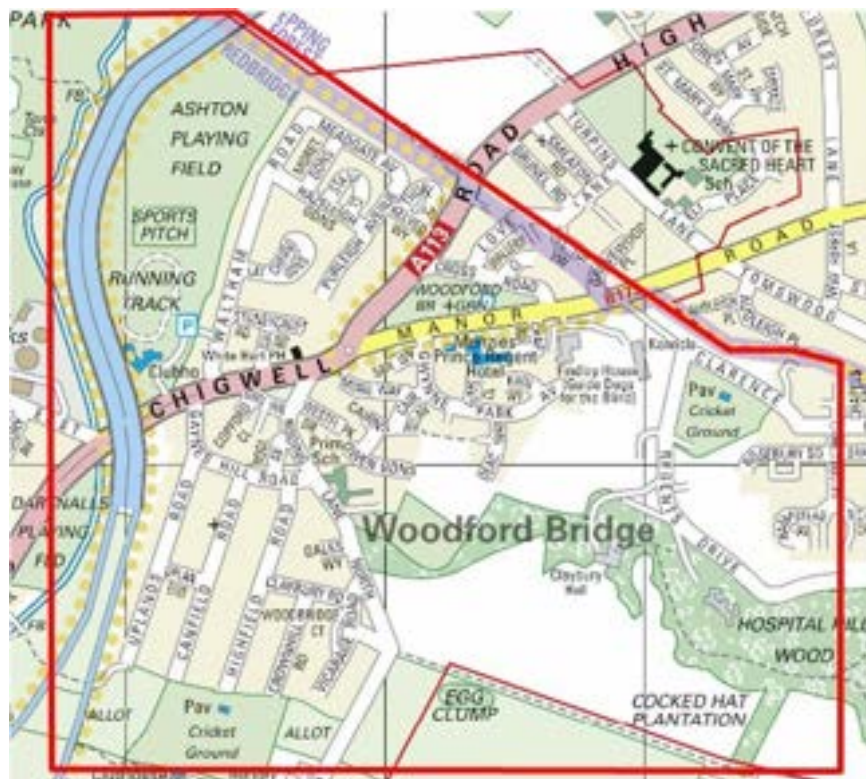


A digest of the latest accounts is provided in [Appendix 2](#).



The Parish

The Parish of St Paul in Woodford Bridge came into existence in 1854 and is situated to the northeast of central London on the border between the London Borough of Redbridge and the county of Essex. The Parish is in the Diocese of Chelmsford and the Deanery of Redbridge, with a population of approximately 5000. There is a growing ethnic minority living within the Parish, some of whom worship with us. Approximately one-half of the Church membership live within the Parish, and 90 are presently listed on the electoral roll.



Housing is mostly small private property, with a fair proportion of council houses, many now privately owned. There is a private housing estate built on the former Dr Barnardo’s site and one of superior houses on the grounds of the former Claybury Hospital, part of which lies within our Parish.

There are approximately 30 small shops, including a small supermarket, garage, 2 public houses, several restaurants and a large hotel opposite the Church which is often used for wedding receptions.

Woodford Green Athletics Club with Essex ladies, Woodford Town football club and Ashton Playing Fields are in the parish and one of our Curates is Chaplain to the Athletics Club.

Primary medical care is available in the Parish and other facilities are within easy reach.

Two local bus routes pass through Woodford Bridge, with the nearest Underground station being Woodford on the Central Line located approximately 1 mile away.

Roding Primary School is in the Parish, with students using the Church for educational visits and occasional services. West Hatch High School is a nearby secondary comprehensive with close links to the Parish and uses the Church for Christmas Carol services.



Parish Buildings

The Church



Our Church is a picturesque Victorian stone building, erected in 1854 with seating for 220 people on traditional wooden pews. The adjacent graveyard is closed.

The Church has two entrances, the main one leading out onto a large driveway to Cross Road with the other opening out on to Manor Road. We also have wheelchair access into the church with a newly built accessible toilet.

There is lighting for the spire that is sponsored via dedicated donations.



The Vicarage

The Vicarage is an average size four-bedroom detached house facing the Church and the Green. There is off-street parking, together with a carport and small garden to the front and rear.

The ground floor has two reception rooms, a large study, kitchen and entrance hall, together with a utility room, storeroom and toilet. Upstairs are three double and one single bedroom, a bathroom and a separate toilet.

The property has full gas central heating with solar panels on the roof for electricity.

The Vicarage,
4 Cross Road,
Woodford
Bridge,
Essex
IG8 8BW



The Church Halls



The Church Halls, previously the Victorian Parish School, are now used by various community groups throughout the year.

The Church Halls are also let for community events including parties of primary age children at weekends and other community users.

Many of the celebratory occasions in the Church calendar also take place within the Church Halls, including the Christmas and Summer fairs.



The School House



The Victorian two-bedroom School House adjacent to the Church Halls is presently let by the PCC at market rates.



All the buildings for which the PCC are responsible for are in good order, having been recently refurbished.



Appendix 1 – Deanery Profile

Redbridge is a large and varied deanery comprising over 20 parishes and churches from the very small to among the largest in the diocese. The borough of Redbridge represents a similar diversity of ethnicity, age, socio-economic status, and religion. These features make for a vibrant and challenging context in which to engage in ministry. The next vicar of St Paul’s will be welcomed into a chapter seeking to support one another in our variety of contexts, and particularly conscious of the fact that we are doing this work with fewer stipendiary posts. There will be opportunities to share in fellowship and ideas at the regular chapter meetings, and at synod, and we are always open to the new ideas and gifts that each new member of chapter can bring.

Each locality within the deanery is encouraged to engage and support each other in the way that best suits their own context. That has taken shape in our Diocese as Mission and Ministry Partnerships, which are now encouraged to evolve and grow without compulsion, but as best enables shared mission and mutual support. I would encourage the incumbent of St Paul’s to take an active part in the new phase for the Barkingside Bridge partnership to enable it to find its own direction and relevance.

As Area Dean I look forward to welcoming the new incumbent, and to providing whatever support I can to smooth the arrival and beginning of an exciting challenge that we face in Redbridge and our parishes.

Martyn Hawkes
Area Dean

Appendix 2 – 2022 Accounts

Church Accounts

St Paul's, Woodford Bridge - Digest of P/L accounts, 2022			
Income	£	Expenditure:	£
Planned charitable giving	34,178	Overseas - Kenyan St Children	8,000
Collections at all services	5,201	Nominated charities	5,278
Donations and appeals	11,973	Trussell Trust – Food bank	2,500
Income tax recoverable	10,200	Sub Total	15,778
Sub Total	61,552	Diocesan Parish Contribution	57,000
Fetes, bazaars and other fund-raising events	8,155	Church running expenses	12,453
Bookstall sales	0	Church maintenance	1,081
Sub Total	8,155	Upkeep of services	457
Dividends and Interest	47	Church hall running costs	14,655
Sub Total	47	Bank charges / depreciation	500
Church hall lettings etc	24,070	Toilet project costs	4,237
Textile group/Seniors club	0	Sub Total	90,679
Occasional offices – weddings, funerals, etc	5,400		
Sub Total	29,470		
Party deposits	0		
Insurance claims	nil		
Rent – School House	18,000		
Sub Total	18,000		
Totals	117,224		106,457

Appendix 3 – Ministry Team & Churchwardens

Revd Ian Monks
Curate (PTO)



Revd Alan Bolding
Curate (PTO)



Chaplain to Woodford Green
Athletics Club with Essex
Ladies.

Mr Mac Leonard
Licensed Lay Minister
Deanery Lay Ministry
Advisor
Barking Area Assistant
Warden of Readers
CofE representative
Redbridge SACRE



Mrs Jill Leonard
Locally Authorised Preacher
Pastoral Assistant
Barking Area Authorised
Pastoral Assistant Link



Mr Len Stevens
Churchwarden
Church Treasurer



Mr Paul Malam
Churchwarden
Vice Chair PCC



Appendix 4 – Further Information

Further information regarding the Church may be found on its website <http://www.stpaulswb.com/>



St Paul’s Church recognises and acknowledges the grateful use of photography in this publication from a variety of sources, and to those individuals that may feature.