



Faringdon and Little Coxwell



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This guide is based on our recent Parish Profile – a key document in advertising for a new Vicar. Rev Maria Jukes begins her new role in May 2023.

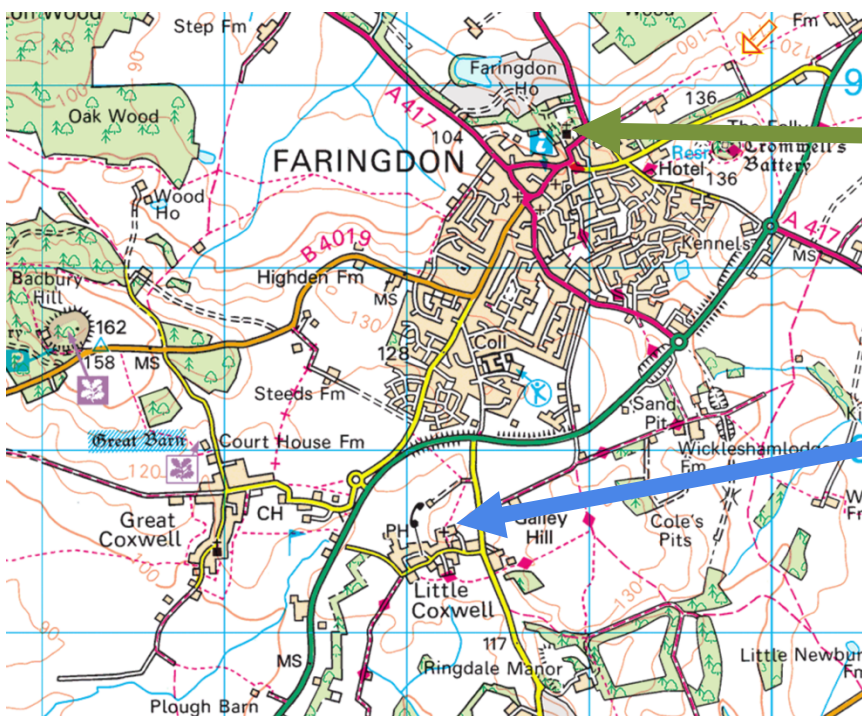
Welcome & Introduction

Part of the diocese of Oxford, All Saints ministers to a fast-growing market town and is a warm, open-hearted part of God's family. The church is open evangelical in character and benefits from a broad range of churchmanship. St Mary's, Little Coxwell is in the same benefice as All Saints.



A view of All Saints during a town event

Faringdon is located in the Vale of White Horse in rural south-west Oxfordshire, between the major centres of Oxford (18 miles) and Swindon (12 miles). The Vale is an area of considerable natural beauty and the historic centre of Faringdon is a conservation area. Faringdon provides services for smaller settlements in the west of the Vale. Little Coxwell is 2 miles from the centre of Faringdon, separated from the town by the A420 bypass. South of the village is open countryside, with views across the Vale to the Uffington White Horse.



All Saints

St Mary's

Vale of White Horse Deanery



Uffington White Horse

There are 27 churches in the Deanery of the Vale of White Horse. It is a predominantly rural deanery, situated within the administrative area of the Vale of White Horse District Council, and stretches from Bourton and Buscot in the west to Longworth in the

east, and from the River Thames in the north to the Downs in the south, with agriculture as the principal economic driver. Faringdon is the only town in the deanery. There is extensive new housing development especially in Faringdon and Shrivenham. Many of the villages in the deanery have small populations, though a number retain their schools and some amenities. It is an area of great natural beauty that attracts many visitors.

The Deanery Synod meets three times a year. Recent meetings have considered diocesan rural strategy, Christian stewardship, and engagement with the local community in social care. A weekly on-line prayer meeting is held, its agenda shared widely across the Deanery for personal devotions.

In June 2022, the Deanery's Mission Action Plan was approved with the special focus of signing up to the Eco Church movement. The appointment of a Schools Worker/Chaplain is being considered. Many of the schools in the deanery are members of the Faringdon Academy of Schools, but there are also four voluntary controlled or voluntary aided schools.

Faringdon

Faringdon has a population of over 8,000, projected to rise to 11,000 over the next five years. Recently, new estates have been built or planned, and the population has increased by more than 20% since 2000 - twice the growth rate of the surrounding area.

The town has a wide social mix, although in terms of ethnicity it is less diverse than the country as a whole. A significant portion of the population has lived here for several generations, but numerous families have moved to the town in recent years. Many commute to nearby towns while some work either in Faringdon or in rural industries in the immediate neighbourhood.

Although Faringdon is generally a fairly prosperous town, there are still some areas of deprivation and the local churches in partnership with the town council run a food bank. In addition, "The Place" (www.theplace-faringdon.org) is a community led charity (including local churches) which welcomes families with children under five.

Faringdon has a medical practice and a dental surgery. A variety of purpose-built accommodation exists for the elderly.

Faringdon supports a good mix of local businesses and shops, as well as coffee shops, restaurants, pubs and hotels. In recent years larger supermarkets have been built on the edges of town.



In a parish survey, completed by members of the church and the wider community, we asked what people like about living in Faringdon

Weekly markets and a monthly farmers' market continue to be held on Tuesdays and Saturdays. Other amenities include a leisure centre and swimming pool, a cycle park, a skate park, and a very wide number of thriving sports, social, cultural and other clubs and societies. The town has bus services to Swindon, Oxford and Wantage. (More information from www.faringdowntowncouncil.gov.uk).

Faringdon and Little Coxwell are served by two primary schools The Elms and Folly View, and a secondary school, Faringdon Community College - all of which are academy schools in the Faringdon Learning Trust. (www.faringdonlearningtrust.org) Although not Church of England schools, the church welcomes its links with these schools and is regularly looking to develop new initiatives.

In Faringdon, the vicar will also have a civic presence and continue the good relations between the church and town. Remembrance and civic services remain an important opportunity to share the good news of Jesus.

Many of Faringdon's residents bring their children for baptism; there are large and lively baptismal services (on Sundays at 10:30) every few months. This year we have a waiting list for families wanting their children baptised. The church is also used for weddings and funerals by many across the town.



Baptism with the new font



A recent wedding at All Saints

Little Coxwell

The beautiful little church of St Mary's has been a place of worship since the 12th Century. There are 119 adults on the civil electoral register of Little Coxwell. The population is of mixed age groups, with an increasing number of younger families moving into the village. There is a strong sense of community, to which church members make a significant contribution.

Little Coxwell has a modern and very well equipped Village Hall which is used for church and other village events, as well as being hired out for private functions. There is no village shop but local farmers sell some produce. The village pub, The Eagle Tavern, serves excellent food and is well supported by both the village and the wider community. Most villagers commute further afield for employment. A few work in the village, mainly in farming, estate management and equestrian activities. The headquarters of the Hurlingham Polo Association is located here. There are allotments providing produce, including for the Harvest Festival.



A jubilee celebration in Little Coxwell

Worshipping at All Saints

Our Sunday services are a regular, visible demonstration of commitment to each other as well as to visitors, fringe members and the unchurched in our community. Our prayer is that Spirit-filled Sunday worship will energise and encourage the church family to live out our faith fully.

Our services are characterised by variety - whether formal or informal, clergy- or lay-led. We are warmly evangelical: the Bible is central to our faith and we aim to 'correctly handle the word of truth'. We do this prayerfully and considerately, recognising that there will be a range of approaches and interpretation, both in the congregation and in the preaching team. Everyone is welcome, regardless of age, background or stage of faith. Our spectrum of churchmanship is wide and we value this breadth.



10.30 service at All Saints

Current pattern of services:

9.00am	Holy Communion
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Usual monthly pattern for 10.30am services
(Junior Saints runs on all but 1st Sunday)

1 st Sunday	All Age service
2 nd Sunday	Communion Service
3 rd Sunday	Morning Prayer
4 th Sunday	Communion Service
5 th Sunday	Morning Prayer with baptisms

Average Sunday attendances	
Service Time	Number
9.00am	20
10.30am	79

Women and men are equally represented in every aspect of ministry, leadership, welcome and support. With sensitive leadership, we as a church want to grow in both in number and in depth of faith.



The worship group at All Saints

Services

Different styles of worship are incorporated into the life of All Saints. Our worship is a mixture of contemporary and traditional, led by a music group which plays a variety of instruments - including piano and guitar. We are always looking to expand this range. We also have a beautiful organ, which is used regularly for some traditional hymns.



9am service in The Pye Chapel

The 9.00am service is traditional, using the Book of Common Prayer for Holy Communion, where clergy robe. Numbers at this valued service have grown slightly in recent years and it has a faithful congregation, some of whom attend the later service as well.

Between the morning services, our church bells are rung every Sunday by a welcoming and award-winning team of ringers.

"We are a welcoming church seeking to engage with all God's children who visit us short term or on a more permanent basis."

Taken from a recent PCC SWOT analysis



Playing a game during the All Age service

The 10.30am service has a mixture of traditional and informal elements. Junior Saints, for primary aged children, runs during term time, except for All Age services on the first Sunday of the month. It is at the clergy's discretion as to whether they robe for this service. Audio visual technology is incorporated, which we hope brings a more modern feel. Tea, coffee and refreshments are served in the Barber Rooms afterwards.



10.30 congregation in the North Transept

During the pandemic, we moved online with our services, with a weekly "magazine style" service being well received and attracting some people to All Saints for the first time. Other innovations that we tried during the pandemic were drive-in Carol Services (at a local supermarket car park). As a welcome back for families, we held an "Ice Cream Sundae" Sunday on the first Sunday in September at the 10.30am service. This now continues for all as an annual part of church life.



Ice cream Sunday



Junior Saints recreating a story

Prayer and church life

All Saints has a varied prayer ministry, including:

- a list of specific prayer requests which is produced weekly
- weekly Friday morning prayer meetings
- a prayer chain which operates quickly and effectively
- Lay-led prayer ministry after the 10.30am service
- home groups with extended times of prayer



10.30 congregation in the Nave

- church-wide prayer meetings on the first Wednesday evening of each month.

All Saints has a strong central core of committed & very involved worshippers. We have regular attendees and those who worship less frequently. Our aim is

that by presenting the gospel positively we can encourage less frequent members to worship more regularly, to be more involved and to see the importance of Jesus in their lives.

As All Saints has deepened its expression of faith and commitment over recent years, many new attitudes and approaches have been steadily adopted and developed by our church family. A broad range of home groups have taken root and have become an integral part of our life together. In 2019, the whole church was encouraged to participate in Alpha. In 2021, many of the groups have followed the 'Living in Love and Faith' course. These have both helped us to look outwards and beyond the church.



In a parish survey, completed by members of the church and the wider community, we asked what characteristics people would like to see in our new vicar.

Learning and Caring

All Saints is a place of learning and caring for people of all ages. As Faringdon's parish church, we take seriously the wider responsibility we have for the cure of souls.



A home group social



Junior Saints

Learning

The children & teenagers of our congregation are enthusiastically supported by our Children & Families Leader. In Junior Saints there is at children from 8 families, led by a team of 4 leaders. Christian teaching and activities are provided as appropriate for different ages within the one group. Being a church of all ages is important to us and we value the children and teenagers in our church family. A teenagers' group, FROG (Fully Rely on God) previously met on Sunday afternoons.

For adults, there are home groups for teaching, learning and support. A large proportion of the congregation are involved in these groups. Each is distinctive and autonomous. Groups cover a wide range of styles and all are lay-led, usually meeting fortnightly. They offer a focus for fellowship, learning and enquiry. In Oct 2021, All Saints had a Sanctuary Day (run by ReSource), which was very well supported with over 80 people attending. It was a great encouragement to many, especially coming out of the pandemic. In previous years, an ecumenical Lent course has been organised by Churches Together in Faringdon (CTiF). As well as All Saints, CTiF comprises Baptists, Catholics, United Church (Methodist/URC) and Quakers.

In 2017 a group from All Saints participated in a training course specifically aimed at “market town” churches run by Lead Academy. The course was spread over a two year period and was an excellent learning opportunity; it was from these sessions that we developed our strapline:

“Connecting people with Jesus; sharing his love in our everyday lives”.

We recognise the need to offer training to all church members to help us grow further in our faith and use the gifts that God has given us. This has led us to run, for example, targeted sessions for those who read and lead prayers in services, and another short course on becoming a more welcoming church.

Caring

There is a large network of informal support arrangements, with many members caring pastorally for each other. During the pandemic, support was formalised to ensure regular contact for those in need.



A church lunch in the Barber Rooms

The church supports 12 Christian missional charities – see Appendix D. Each charity has a church representative from the congregation. They will create a display in church for the entire month. Pre-pandemic, seasonal services were held at our local nursing homes, Ferendune and Coxwell Hall, and these are gradually resuming. Post Covid, social activities for the congregation are also resuming. We put considerable emphasis on ensuring everyone is included and warmly welcomed. In the last year we have hosted a quiz night, summer church lunch and a harvest bring and share lunch.

Currently, the majority of the support offered to the congregation and the wider town is done on an informal basis. The expansion in population and new families moving in, combined with the population of the town growing older, will mean that pastoral care needs will increase. This in turn will lead to an increase in prayer, time and resources and therefore a more formal approach to pastoral care will need to be considered. The new vicar will need to review how best we manage our limited resources in this important area.

All Saints is working towards being accredited as an EcoChurch.



A summer garden party



A bring and share lunch after the 10.30 service

"By this all people will know you are my disciples, if you love one another." John 13:35

“Connecting people with Jesus; sharing his love in our everyday lives”.



Live Nativity in the Market Square

visibility of the church amongst the new estates.

In the next five years or so, the population of Faringdon is estimated to rise by 3,000. This planned growth is a source of fresh challenge for us and focuses our thinking. We desire to have a positive impact on our wider community. We are eager to raise the

Pre Covid

As a church, we feel called to engage with the wider community, and share the gospel wherever possible. Particular highlights over the past five years have included:

- Working with Churches Together in Faringdon to distribute “welcome packs” to people moving into the new estates.
- A Churches Together outdoor service at Folly Fest – the local annual music festival
- A series of “Science and Faith” evenings in the Corn Exchange (one of Faringdon’s community spaces in the town), with presentations from internationally- recognised scientists.
- Holiday Bible Club (another Churches Together activity) runs in many summer holidays for children in the town, surrounding areas and beyond

“All Saints is active in the community through a good handful of its members who work in local projects like The Mustard Seed shop, Open the Book, Food Bank, Earth & Faith. These activities also lead to respect and good working partnerships between the Town Council and Churches Together.”

Response from our parish questionnaire

We are also a church that likes to try new things and some of our more innovative ways have been:

- Live Nativity in the Market Square - this was run jointly with Churches Together in Faringdon and the local dramatic society. The evening (with live camels and a donkey) was a great success and was very well attended.
- Comedians & Carols - held in the Corn Exchange.
- Christmas through the Keyhole – a retelling in church of the story for years 2 and 4 from local schools.
- A moon rock evening to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Apollo moon landing.



Left: Funeral procession at All Saints

Right: Ice cream Sunday



During the pandemic

Although our activities were disrupted by the pandemic, we worked hard to maintain the visibility of the church and the church community. Key initiatives have been:

- Drive-in Carol services in the Aldi car park - which were very well received and gave a message of hope in the depths of the pandemic.
- Running an Alpha course via Zoom.
- Online Comedy evening.
- Enhancing and updating the church website - including the addition of recent sermons.
- Having a weekly online services in a magazine-style format.

Life after Covid

Activities have restarted and a key challenge is to reconnect with children and families (where numbers have fallen most compared to pre-pandemic). Activities restarting include:



- Little All Sorts, a baby and toddler group - which runs weekly for under 5s and their carers. Little All Sorts was very well supported pre-pandemic and is gradually re-building its attendance. Our Children & Families Leader has recruited a new team of volunteers to help run the activity.



- Visits to the church building by schools, at Christmas and Easter - which also help to develop our links with the local schools. This led to a session in school (not a CofE school) to give Year 6s a Scripture Union 'It's your move' booklet.



- Use of the Barber Rooms by a wide range of community organisations such as weekly groups of Beavers, Scouts, Pilates and various one off events including an afternoon tea with concert for Christian Aid.

- An Alpha course has been run in early 2023, along with a 'warm space'.

- Other ideas we hope to pursue are running a bereavement course and a 4pm service for families.



From top to bottom:

Little All Sorts
After service refreshments
Messy Nativity
Drive in Carol service

Staffing



Linda Ritchie



Mark Jackson



Pippa Regan



Douglas Lines

Churchwardens

Each church has two churchwardens who bring a wealth of experience, support and wisdom.



Paul Winchester



Barbara Mapley



Dick Whittington



Chris Etherton



Jeremy Mais

Retired Clergy

We are fortunate to have in our church family five active retired clergy with permission to officiate. All these are currently happy to take services both at All Saints and St Mary's.



Graham Weller



Helen Wilson

Licensed Lay Ministers

We have two Licensed Lay Ministers. They preach and lead a variety of services at All Saints as well as other activities across our ministries.



Josey Speller

Children and Families Leader

An important new initiative has been the employment in October 2021 of a full-time Children & Families Leader (part funded by the diocese). This demonstrates our commitment to engage with the schools and wider community.



Alison Scott

Administrator

We have a paid part-time church administrator, who works four mornings each week. We also have other members of our congregation who also contribute valuable skills and time to cover a wide range of administrative tasks.

The Laity



All Age Harvest service

The clergy-laity relationship is one of partnership and mutual support and there is a large degree of lay involvement in every aspect of the church's life. All Saints has a long tradition of lay involvement in all areas of church life under the oversight of the vicar. Wardens are elected every year and tend to serve 4 to 6 years; this ensures a good base of hands-on experience. The congregation includes a wide array of gifted and mature Christians who, with encouragement and guidance of the vicar, lead and serve in a variety of ways. These include:

- Home group leadership, and Alpha courses.
- Leading young people's groups.
- Leading Little All Sorts - a weekly baby and toddlers group.
- Intercessions, Bible reading and prayer ministry.
- Flower Guild, including occasional Flower Festivals.
- Refreshments after 10.30am service and other occasions.
- Hosting teas for seniors and those who live alone.
- Social events such as the Summer and Harvest Festival bring-and-share lunches.
- Experienced financial oversight.
- Buildings upkeep and monitoring.
- Ringing the bells and belfry maintenance.
- Maintaining the cemetery on Coach Lane.
- Safeguarding officers for children and vulnerable adults.



All Saints Finances and Giving



Many members give regularly via the Parish Giving Scheme, which helped the church considerably through the pandemic. Total income for All Saints in 2021 was £144,986. Total expenditure was £128,038. The Parish Share is always paid in full.

In addition to the Barber Rooms (which are now fully paid for), the church has also spent a significant amount recently on roofing repairs, these having been identified in our 2015 Quinquennial Survey. Our most recent Quinquennial (2020) did not identify any major areas of work required.

We are thankful that All Saints is in a healthy financial position with a good level of giving from the congregation. The majority of the congregation give through regular planned giving, enabling us to reclaim Gift Aid on a significant proportion of our income.

Our church finances mainly comprise the unrestricted General Fund covering the day-to-day running of the church and a number of other funds (designated, restricted and endowment) relating to specific aspects of the church's life (e.g. maintenance of the organ).

As a church, our faith has been expressed in generous giving. For example, prayer for our Mission of the Month and other charities is backed up by giving at least 10% of our unrestricted income. In 2021, a total of £14,360 was given to charities and missions, exceeding our aim of giving at least 10% of our General Fund income. Over the past decade, major building work has been funded by the congregation in order to develop our ministry and mission.

Missions of the month for 2022

Jan	Tear Fund	https://www.tearfund.org/
Feb	Interserve	https://www.interserve.org.uk/
Mar	Faringdon Family Centre	
Apr	Africa Children's Fund	https://www.africanchildrensfund.org/
May	Christian Aid	https://www.christianaid.org.uk/
Jun	Church Mission Society	https://churchmissionsociety.org/
Jul	International Nepal Fellowship	https://www.inf.org/
Aug	Wycliffe Bible Translators	https://wycliffe.org.uk/
Sep	Scripture Union	https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/
Oct	The Bible Society (Open The Book)	https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/
Nov	WATSAN	https://watsanuganda.org/
Dec	The Children's Society	https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/



All Saints Premises

The church is a large, cruciform building dating from the early 13th century with the usual history of later extension and restoration. Grade I listed, it is in good repair, though any building of this age naturally requires on-going maintenance.

It can seat around 350. Two meeting rooms, toilets and servery were built within the under-used South Transept in the 1990s.

In 2014, we opened a new set of parish rooms linked to the church, known as the Barber Rooms. This light, modern space is predominantly one large room (which can be separated into 2 meeting rooms if required), a built-in digital projector, the church office (where our administrator is based), toilets (including one with access for people with disabilities) and kitchen facilities. These rooms are used for a wide range of church-based activities, including Sunday children and youth activities, mid-week fellowship and teaching evenings, coffee mornings, lectures, occasional training sessions and PCC meetings. They are also selectively let out for local community organisations and events.

Maintenance of the main churchyard is the responsibility of the town council, although we remain responsible for the current 'open churchyard' at Coach Lane.



All Saints Nave



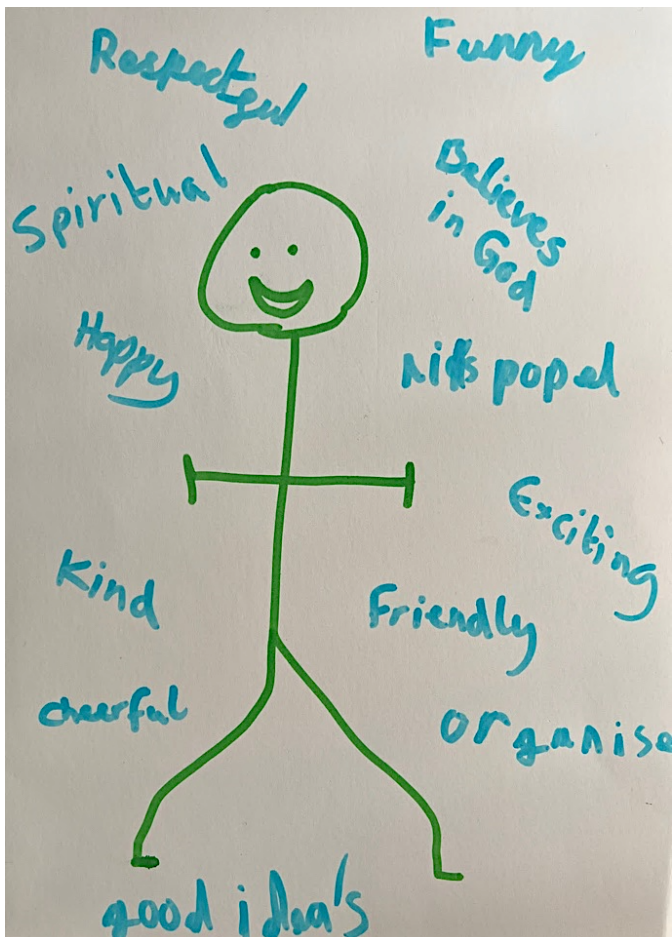
The Barber Rooms

Further development

In the past couple of years, we've started to think about partial reordering of the church. Early in 2022, to help develop our ideas, PCC members visited three nearby churches that had recently completed reordering projects. The church's Fabric Committee are working on proposals to submit to the PCC. We already have excellent kitchen facilities and toilets, so our priorities are a more flexible and inviting seating, a welcome area for newcomers and improved lighting. Our hope is that by creating a more flexible space, we will encourage greater use of the building, both by the church and the wider community.

We have also recently updated our church noticeboard to give a more contemporary impression.

We asked the children at All Saints what kind of person they'd like in our next vicar



"So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling-place for God."

Ephesians 2:19-22

All Saints

As we move forward into a new chapter of the life of All Saints, we have summarised our hopes for the future of the church family in a few sentences. We seek to:

- be inclusive and welcoming to all, enabling the exploration of faith in God in their own way and at their own pace, with support and encouragement to develop their God-given gifts.
- have excellent worship and preaching that is Spirit-led, relevant and dynamic for all ages and encourages us to respond.
- develop a contemporary service (perhaps in a non-traditional church setting) that caters for the needs of young families – whilst still retaining our existing mix of services.
- see our work with children and families continue to grow and thrive and be a blessing to the whole town.
- continue to build good relationships with all our local schools.
- be an outward-looking church that serves our surrounding community. As part of this, we are keen to seek ways in which we can enhance the flexibility of our church buildings so that they can be used more widely by our local community.
- grow in numbers and become more representative of our local community.
- further equip our home groups to ensure they remain a place of encouragement, support and personal growth.