

# St. John the Baptist Bodicote



## Parish Profile



### **Our Parish Prayer**

Ever living God, give us the courage to be your church in the community and for the community, and teach us new ways to share your love with all those around us. Amen

### **Welcome**

We are delighted that you are considering the post of Vicar of St. John the Baptist Church, Bodicote. We are looking forward to appointing a dynamic priest who can lead us to new and exciting things from our well-proven established base.

So, if you:

- would like to live and work in a single parish benefice in an attractive part of North Oxfordshire.
- have a pastoral heart.
- are forward facing, enthusiastic and energetic.

**PLEASE READ ON!**

Dear potential applicants

I am delighted that you are reading this profile and encourage you to pray about whether this position might be the role to which God is now calling you.

The people of this benefice are praying for a dynamic, forward facing, enthusiastic Vicar with a pastoral heart. Here is a wonderful opportunity for someone to lead the parish into the future from a well-proven and established base.

If you are an effective communicator and a team player, whilst having the ability to lead in exploring new opportunities for growth (particularly with children, families and in conjunction with the schools), comfortable with different styles of worship and would relish being a visible presence in the community, then please read on!

You can see how much the ministry already offered through the church is appreciated in some of the quotes included in this profile. Here is a warm and friendly congregation who wish to grow in their relationship with God and with the local community. The parish is blessed with a strong and committed PCC, safeguarding lead, volunteers as well as paid administrative support.

You will find a friendly deanery with supportive colleagues. Our episcopal area and diocese are in good heart, expectant for all that God will do and thankful for all that God is doing.

The parish recognises that the church does not, in all ways, share the diversity of the community it serves and would welcome applications from those who would increase diversity.

Please pray about whether you might be the right minister to join us. If you decide to apply, I would be delighted to receive your application for this key position and look forward to the possibility of welcoming you as a potential colleague and partner in the Gospel.

With every blessing

*+ Gavin Dorchester*

The Rt Revd Gavin Collins, Bishop of Dorchester



**Our congregation says...**

*A wonderful, welcoming, family-friendly church. I pop in regularly, sometimes with my children, for some quiet moments. We put a pebble in the prayer pool, remember those we miss and say a little thank you for all the good things in our lives.*

*Coming to St John's church gives me a feeling of belonging. It has been 'my' church for 43 years, and although I haven't lived in Bodicote for over 28 years, I wouldn't worship on a Sunday anywhere else. St John's church is part of who I am.*

Faith is what helps us to stay strong and stick it out whatever the circumstances even when things get hard, and by going to church at St Johns it has helped me to grow more in my faith in all the years I have attended. I should state I do not attend church on a Sunday on a regular basis, but I do attend the Wednesday morning services when they are on, and I do now lead the Evening Prayer session on Zoom on a Friday afternoon.

*St John's church makes me feel comfortable in my faith. The congregation is supportive and I would like the new vicar to help me to take my faith into the wider community.*

*St Johns gives me a structure for the week ahead, with the grounding of the BCP service on a Sunday morning, the sermons, and the readings on the sheet to review over the week. I appreciate the fellowship.*

The congregation are true Christians, welcoming, friendly and helpful. I want our new vicar to help me strengthen my faith.

*I use the pebble pool when I have concerns about my family and friends. I find it reassuring that as well as my own prayer all pebbles in the pool are dedicated at one of the weekly services.*

## The Pebble Pool

An explanation...

Each pebble placed in the pool represents a prayer – either for yourself, for someone else or in memory of someone dear to you. You are invited to choose a pebble and to put it in the pool. The water represents Christ the Living Water. Before you place the pebble in the water, you may wish to take it in your hand and find somewhere quiet to say the prayer that follows:

**Loving Father, I bring to you (the person/need) who/which this pebble represents. May Christ's living water bring peace and healing and wholeness. Please receive my prayer which I ask in the name of your dear Son, Jesus Christ. Amen**

Having prayed the prayer, place the pebble into the water.

### What happens to your pebble?

At the Sunday 8:00am communion service, the pool is put on the altar. The Pebble Pool Prayer is offered during the service. After the service, the pebbles are removed and the pool emptied. Fresh water is then placed in the pool.

### The Pebble Pool Prayer

**Loving Father, in whose hands we place ourselves day by day; we bring before you all those whom these pebbles represent, their needs or their remembrance, committing all things to your love. We know that we are all important to you and so we pray also for your grace and blessing on those who used these pebbles in love and concern for others.**

**We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.**



## **Summary of the Parish**

The Church lies at the heart of a vibrant parish encompassing the village of Bodicote (including the new Cotefield and Pavilions estates) and the neighbouring residential areas of Longford Park and Cherwell Heights, both of which are part of Banbury. Situated on the southern edge of Banbury in North Oxfordshire, the parish has both village and suburban elements. It is currently made up of around 3,000 homes, just over 1,000 of which are in Bodicote itself.

The parish is not short of amenities. Bodicote itself has a Londis shop containing a Post Office, two pubs, a garden centre with a cafe, a hairdresser and a picture framer. The Cherwell Heights estate has a Co-op, private dentist, opticians, pub, chinese takeaway and fish & chip shop.

The parish benefits from excellent transport links. Banbury town centre is just 2 miles to the north and provides direct rail services to Oxford (20 minutes), Birmingham (50 minutes), and London Marylebone (1 hour). The nearby M40 motorway offers convenient access to the Midlands, Thames Valley and London. Regular bus routes connect the parish with Banbury and surrounding villages. The nearest airport for domestic and international flights is Birmingham International.

The Horton Hospital is situated just a mile north of the parish in the centre of Banbury. Banbury has a number of GP surgeries, as well as other health provision such as opticians and dentists. There are several secondary schools within the area, both state and independent.

A small care home, Fairholme House, is situated on the same road as the Church and cares for up to 22 people. Planning Permission has been approved for the building of two larger care homes on the Longford Park Estate. Bodicote Parish Church Housing Association, a charity in its own right, manages Dillon Court which comprises 12 flats and a bungalow as independent living accommodation. It also manages Dillon House where there is a common room, toilets and a kitchen.

Adjacent to the Church is our Church House, a building that is let commercially to community groups and local businesses, with bookings most days. It is used by the congregation each Sunday morning following the 9:45am service for refreshments and is freely available for church use for our other events, with prior notice. It also acts as the local polling station. It is equipped with a kitchen and accessible toilets and significant improvement was made to the car park recently to improve accessibility.



*Church House*

As well as our own church hall, Bodicote, Longford Park and Cherwell Heights all have their own community centres and each area also has a primary school. In Bodicote, Bishop Loveday is our Church of England Primary School, whilst The Grange Community Primary School is located in Cherwell Heights and Longford Park Primary School is obviously in Longford Park. Bodicote is home to two nurseries, Kingsfield Nursery and Saltway Day Nursery. Cherwell Heights has a local playgroup, Chasewell Nursery.

For recreation, the local area offers a number of countryside walks, green spaces and children's playgrounds. Bannatynes Health Club is located within the parish, offering a gym, exercise classes, swimming pool and spa therapy rooms. Banbury Cricket Club and Banbury Rugby Club are also located within the confines of the parish. The village is well known locally for its popular Bonfire Night firework display.

Nearby Banbury is an historic market town with a diverse community and an array of leisure amenities. The Light cinema complex is a recent welcome addition. Residents can enjoy shopping and dining in the town's independent stores, cafés, and restaurants or visit the Castle Quay Shopping Centre, Banbury Cross Retail Park or Gateway Retail Park situated near the M40 Junction. The recent Lock29 development has enhanced the town's culinary scene. There are also markets in the town centre on Thursdays and Saturdays plus a monthly farmers' market.

Banbury has several parks, including Spiceball Country Park, with its riverside walks and cycle paths. The town also features a modern leisure centre with a swimming pool, gym, and sports facilities. There is also a bowling alley, library and cinema. Woodgreen Leisure Centre offers a library and very popular outdoor swimming pool. The town centre is home to Banbury Museum and The Mill Art Theatre which stages a number of productions.

St. John the Baptist Bodicote



*Church Street, Bodicote*



*Bodicote Mill*



*Sunset from the churchyard*





*The South Window*

### **Our new incumbent**

Before advertising for a new vicar, the PCC felt it was really important to seek the views of all parishioners. Therefore, it was decided to ask the entire parish, “What qualities would you like them to have?” To obtain this information, a questionnaire was included in the bi-monthly parish magazine (which is delivered to 3000 households by volunteers). Boxes and forms were also provided in the church, Church House, the three local primary schools and the local pre-school nursery.

Therefore, if you are someone who is:

- an effective communicator, able to build on what we have which works well and develop new initiatives, especially those that will encourage children and families.
- energetic and open to explore opportunities for growth.
- comfortable with exploring different styles of worship.
- a visible presence in our community.
- an encouraging and supportive team player.
- organised with good admin skills and comfortable with IT.

then we would love to hear from you.

### **We would like a new vicar to help us**

- Reach out and engage with all parts of our growing parish and communities, showing our presence to those we serve, including by developing a wider range of ministry to allow us to connect with children and younger families without detriment to our existing congregation.
- Encourage our existing congregation and newcomers to fully explore their talents for the benefit of themselves, the Church and the parish and to be supportive of them when they do.
- Build on existing relationships with each of the three primary schools in our parish and to encourage their pupils to see the Church as a safe and relevant part of their lives.
- Build and strengthen relationships with community groups within our parish.
- Continue our existing outreach to older members of our parish, for example our bi-weekly afternoon teas.
- Improve long term engagement with baptism families and confirmation candidates to support them in their faith.
- Nurture the spiritual growth of the congregation to allow us all to foster a deeper relationship with God.
- Explore and develop the music in church.



*The Christmas craft session*

### The parish can offer

- A loyal congregation who are friendly and offer a warm welcome to visitors.
- A single parish benefice, which is financially sound and has always paid the Parish Share in full.
- An attractive church in the heart of the village, which is open every day for prayer and reflection.
- A strong team of committed churchwardens, treasurer, safeguarding lead, PCC and paid administrative support.
- A small band of dedicated volunteers.
- The process of exploring opportunities for outreach has begun, with efforts made including a book and jigsaw library in church, Afternoon teas, Lent Lunches, Bingo afternoons, a website and Facebook page and the parish magazine hand-delivered to every household in the parish.
- A good relationship with all three primary schools including welcoming schools for special seasonal services and, when a vicar was in post, leading assemblies, providing whole-school experiences in church at Easter and Pentecost and a presence on the Governing Body of Bishop Loveday CE VA Primary School.
- Wi-Fi, with its numerous opportunities, available in church and church house.



*Afternoon tea*

## The Church

St. John the Baptist Church has existed in some form since the 13th century, the chancel arch standing as evidence of the church's medieval origins.

The church underwent significant reconstruction in the 14th century but by the 1840s it had fallen into a state of disrepair and was deemed too small for its parishioners.

This led to an extensive rebuilding project under architect John Plowman of Oxford. The north tower was demolished and replaced with the current west-end tower, the north aisle was rebuilt and extended to match the south aisle, and a small vestry was added on the north side of the chancel.

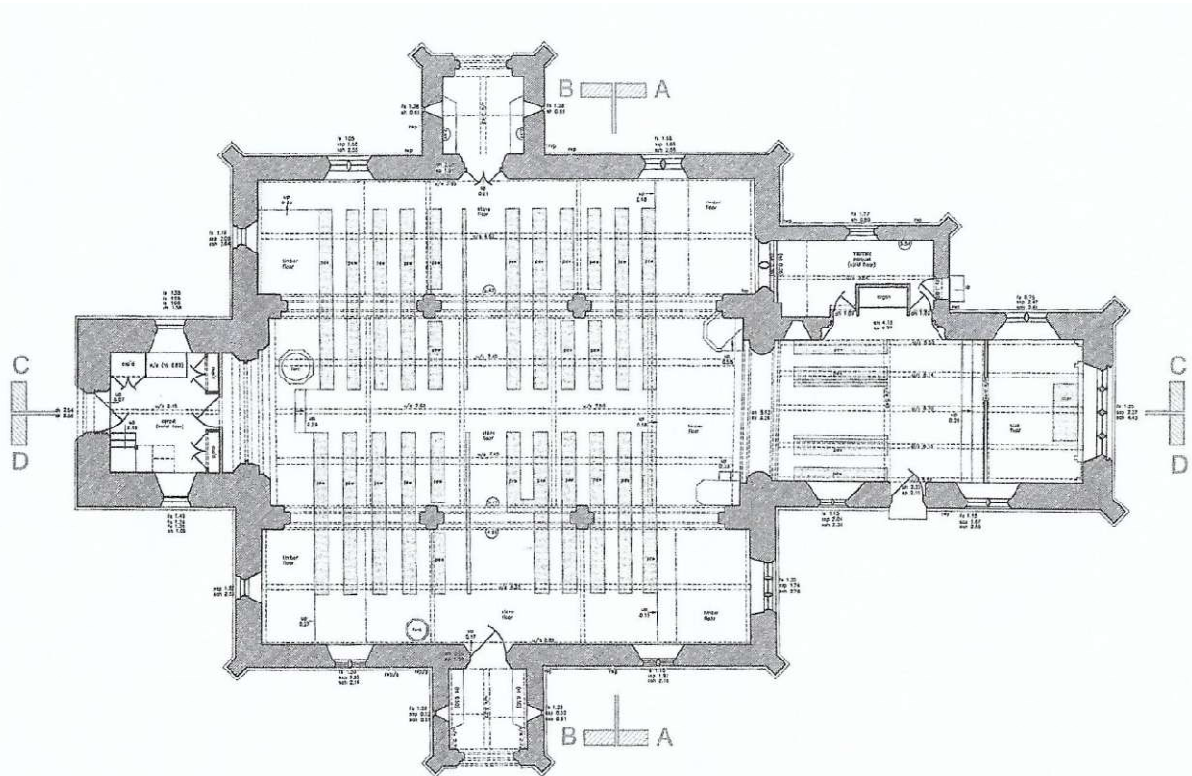
Until 1855, St. John the Baptist had been a chapel of ease but at this time it was made its own parish by Order of the Council.

Further alterations and amendments to the Church fabric have continued throughout the years, including relatively recent repairs to the beautiful stained glass East Window. Today, St. John the Baptist Church stands as a Grade II\* listed building, with a capacity of approximately 200. The tower has a ring of eight bells and an iron-framed turret clock.



*The East Window*

Preliminary investigations were made with a view to re-ordering the church, resulting in a range of options, but this has been put on hold for the time being.



*The present church layout*

## **Bellringers**

We have a dedicated and enthusiastic team of bellringers. They practice on Monday evenings and ring the bells for the second service on Sunday mornings, plus weddings and special occasions.

## **Choir**

The church has a Makin Westmorland organ installed, used for occasional Sunday services as well as the Christmas carol service. On Sundays when an organist is not available, the church Amazon Fire tablet is connected to the organ sound system via Bluetooth. Our invisible organist sounds amazing. We also have a small choir who sing at the second service on most Sundays.

Both the bellringers and choir members support the church at various fund-raising events.

## Finances

The parish is blessed with a stable financial foundation. We take pride in the fact that we have always paid our parish share (currently the largest in our deanery) in full, demonstrating our commitment to supporting the wider work of the Church of England.

Our parish has a number of permanent endowments specifically invested for the upkeep and maintenance of our church building and to support clergy and their activities. In recent years these have produced sufficient income to support all major maintenance works, ensuring that our building remains a functional and suitable space for worship without necessarily needing to rely on the generosity of parishioners beyond their regular giving. We are also able to fully reimburse all reasonable clergy expenses, recognising the importance of supporting our clergy in their ministry.

The parish is signed up to the Parish Giving Scheme, which is used by around half of our regular donors. Many others give regularly via the bank or our envelope scheme.

Our solid financial footing reflects the generosity and stewardship of our congregation and enables us to explore new opportunities to serve our community and grow in faith together. We are confident that this financial stability will provide a supportive environment for our next vicar to thrive.

The parish actively participates in the Ride and Stride initiative each year, both through welcoming visitors throughout the day and some parishioners participating in riding or striding themselves! This also helps raise funds for both the church and Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust who have supported us with building works in the past.

## Eco Credentials

The church has been awarded both bronze and silver eco awards. These are proudly displayed in the church porch.



## Parish Information

Electoral Roll 2024: 104

### Worship Pattern

#### Sundays

- |         |   |                        |
|---------|---|------------------------|
| 8.00 am | Holy Communion (BCP)  | Average attendance: 8  |
| 9.45 am | Parish Communion (CW)   | Average attendance: 43 |
| 6.00 pm | Occasional Evening Services (i.e. Celebration of Talents, All Souls, Mary Sumner Day, Pentecost Praise) |                        |

#### Wednesdays

9.30 am Communion (CW) (not being held during vacancy)

Monday: Morning Prayer on Zoom (clergy led but lay led during vacancy)

Friday: Evening Prayer on Zoom (clergy led but lay led during vacancy)

Over the past 2 years we have officiated at 7 Weddings and 22 Baptisms.

Home Visits are carried out by a group of volunteers.

Group study sessions at, for example, Lent.

Prayers of Love and Faith: at the PCC meeting on 6th March 2024 these were considered. This is an extract from the minutes of this meeting:

**Living in Love and Faith:** The PCC agreed that the vicar should be willing and able to use the Church of England's prayers for same sex couples.

Parish website: <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/5406/>

Parish Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/BodicoteParishChurch>

## **Bishop Loveday C of E School**

Our school, located in the village of Bodicote, is a popular voluntary-aided Church of England school with approximately 400 children. We want to help every child achieve their full potential by equipping them with a feeling of self-worth, a respectful attitude towards others, an excitement for learning and an enthusiasm for life.

Our aim is for every child at Bishop Loveday to flourish academically (within core subjects and the arts and sport) socially and personally through our challenging and engaging curriculum. Bishop Loveday has a strong ethos of equality, supporting children to understand diversity and celebrate similarities and differences. Children's wellbeing is at the heart of everything we do. Our curriculum has a very positive impact on all pupils' behaviour, and contributes very well to pupils' academic achievement, their physical well-being, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Our curriculum is informed by research and deliberately designed to enable all of our children to have equal access to knowledge, to value the pursuit of that knowledge and to be able to use that knowledge for good.

We work within a Christian environment and have strong links with our village Church, St. John the Baptist, of which four members of the congregation are foundation governors, and the Diocese of Oxford. Our Christian values of Kindness, Honesty and Courage underpin everything that we do and are reflected in our children's behaviours and respect towards each other.

Bishop Loveday is proud to be part of The Warriner Multi-Academy Trust, and as such we are able to offer 4 – 18 education, with our pupils being guaranteed a place at The Warriner School to continue their education as a secondary pupil.

*Extract from School website*





## **The Grange Community Primary School**

The Grange Community Primary School, situated in Banbury, Oxfordshire, is a large community primary school for children aged 4 to 11. The school emphasises that "Our Children Come First," fostering strong, supportive, and selfless relationships within its community.

Central to the school's ethos is "The Grange Way," a set of values that every member of the school community follows. These values encourage students to:

- Smile and say 'Hello'
- Listen to learn
- Care for everyone and everything
- Keep healthy and have a positive attitude
- Work hard and challenge themselves

The Grange is committed to personalising learning to ensure all children succeed and reach their fullest potential, regardless of background, ability, or need. The school offers a broad, balanced, and inspiring curriculum delivered by dedicated teachers, ensuring a solid foundation of skills in mathematics, reading, spelling, grammar, and writing. These skills are accessed through rich, dynamic, and inspiring learning opportunities.

The school's inclusive ethos ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), do well. All achievements are celebrated meaningfully, and all pupils benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities. Pupils are proud of the responsibilities they take on, such as their work as reading and mental health ambassadors.

The Grange's commitment to high expectations is evident in its dedication to providing the highest quality learning environment and experiences for all children, ensuring they are happy, healthy, and experience a relevant and modern curriculum fit for modern Britain.



## Longford Park Primary School

### Our Vision:

***To instil aspiration and high expectations in every child to empower them all to become successful citizens of the world.***

At Longford Park Primary School we believe that all children have the right to develop ambition and achieve their own potential. It is our belief that we are creating future adults with the skills and inclination to leave a positive impact on the world – anywhere in the world.

Our Global Values are underpinned by fundamental British Values but more than that, our values-centred curriculum is our commitment to ensuring that when they leave Longford Park School, our children are true Global Citizens regardless of their background or any protected characteristics.

We teach and expect every child to demonstrate high levels of personal integrity, confidence, and articulacy that they will carry with them throughout their lives wherever they live.

This is why we strive to instil aspiration and high expectations in every child - without exception - so they can each become a successful citizen of the world through excellence in all that we do.

### Our Mission:

To create a nurturing community that promotes **respect, appreciation and compassion;**

To create a learning environment that promotes **determination, resilience and grit;**

To celebrate high standards through **excellence, creativity and curiosity;**

To create an environment that promotes **responsibility, leadership and teamwork.**

### Our Core Values:

Respect, Integrity, Kindness, Inclusion

*Extract from school website.*



## The Vicarage



A detached house which was built in the late 1980's. It is located in a prime corner position at the entrance to a small cul-de-sac, an approximate five minute walk from the church. The ground floor of the property comprises a sitting room, kitchen/diner, utility room and cloakroom. There is also a study, cloakroom and lobby with its own separate entrance from the drive. Upstairs there are four bedrooms, one double with en-suite, two further doubles and a single plus a family bathroom. The front garden is laid to lawn and there is an enclosed, manageable rear garden. The property has an Energy Performance Certificate with a rating of C, valid until 2 June 2034.



St. John the Baptist Bodicote



*Living room*



*Kitchen/dining room*



*Study/library*



*Main bedroom*

## Statement from Deddington Deanery

Welcome to Deddington Deanery.

Deddington Deanery is one of the larger and more diverse deaneries in the Diocese of Oxford. In all, there are twenty-nine parishes, with thirty-four churches (in twelve Benefices). The resident population exceeds 76,000, with c.50,500 in the largest town, Banbury, which is increasing rapidly with new housing around the edges.

The clergy Chapter includes eleven incumbents and others, many of whom are retired and enjoy offering help where needed. Incumbents get together frequently, often over an informal lunch, and you will find a lot of support amongst colleagues. The whole chapter (retired and associate clergy, Licensed Lay Ministers) meets 3-4 times a year and spouses are also invited to social gatherings.

One of our main aims is to provide networks of mutual support for each other. We have also recently been re-engaging with our Deanery MAP to find ways to work together in our worship, ministry and outreach.

### Deanery Synod

The Deanery Synod meets up to four times a year at different venues throughout the deanery and in recent years these have had a more relaxed feel so while still purposeful they give an opportunity to learn from and support the different parishes. There is often a keynote speaker or a workshop to consider topics of mutual interest to which synod reps are invited to bring guests.

We have a new Area Dean and Lay Chair who hope to follow in the example of their predecessors. The excellent Deanery Treasurer is a long-standing servant of the Deanery. The Standing Committee is increasingly taking a strategic approach to the work of the deanery and trying to free up synod's agenda to provide space for keynote speakers which support areas of our Mission Action Plan. Recently, we have chosen to focus on Communication, New Housing, Inter-generational Belonging and The Environment.

In February each year we aim to have a Deanery Morning on a Saturday to which all the Deanery are invited. In the previous two years we have had keynote speakers on various topics. In 2025 we are aiming to have a Quiet Day.

Alicia Baker

Area Dean