

# Curacy Profile

## The White Peak and Youlgrave Benefices

### 2023



### Welcome to the Peak District!



Welcome! I am The Rev'd Adele Barker and Priest-in-Charge of the White Peak and Youlgrave Benefices. Together the two Benefices consist of 9 parishes that have recently started working together under my oversight. Each village has its own particular identity and together the parishes cover much of the area known as the White Peak, in the Peak District, Derbyshire.

This profile will help you as you discern where God might be calling you to serve your curacy, but it will only give you a flavour of this place, the people, and the opportunities.

My hope is that it will offer enough for you to want to find out more. This is a wonderful place to serve in rural ministry and if you are inspired to find out more, I look forward to hearing from you.

### Our Context

The White Peak is a beautiful area of Derbyshire sitting within the Peak District National Park and threaded by small rivers, often in steep sided dales. The landscape has been shaped through history by lead mining, quarrying for limestone and other minerals, and agriculture, mostly sheep and cattle grazing. Today lead mining has long gone, but some quarrying and minerals-based industry remain. Tourism has increased considerably.

The two parish groups include ten rural villages, with the limestone buildings and patterns of dry-stone walls characteristic of the White Peak. Most could also be described as 'working' rather than 'chocolate box' villages, with a fairly static population size and a mix of long-term residents and incomers. The total population is only 4500. New housing is strictly limited under National Park planning rules; this and increased house prices excludes some local young couples from the housing market. Only Youlgrave has a population of over 1000; the others are all under 500. Local employment is varied; many residents commute to nearby market towns or slightly further afield to the cities of Manchester, Leeds, Sheffield, Nottingham, Stoke and Derby. Look at [A Church Near You](#) for more details of each community.

The two groups were combined under a Priest-in-Charge in 2022 and are still learning to work together. They contain ten historic churches. Of these, two, Hartington and Youlgrave, have services every Sunday. Three others

currently have two or three services a month; others have services less often and two parishes have become 'Festival Churches' meeting on special occasions rather than regularly. Alongside the Church's principal feasts, harvest festivals and Remembrance are very significant. Worship styles are central, 'country Anglican,' gently eclectic with many creative opportunities.

Across the two groups there are seven church primary schools with a combined school roll of about 260. All the village schools have received recent good or outstanding Ofsted inspections and are seen as key to the life of the village. All have very good relationships with the church and offer ample scope for ministry. Most children will then attend one of three secondary schools, Buxton Community School, Lady Manners in Bakewell or Queen Elizabeth Grammar (now an Academy) in Ashbourne.

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### **A few photos from across the benefices**



Youlgrave has a swimming pool for wild swimming – very popular in the warmer months!



The Jubilee celebrations in Youlgrave



Well Dressing preparations underway in a local garage.

### **The Beauty of the Local Area**

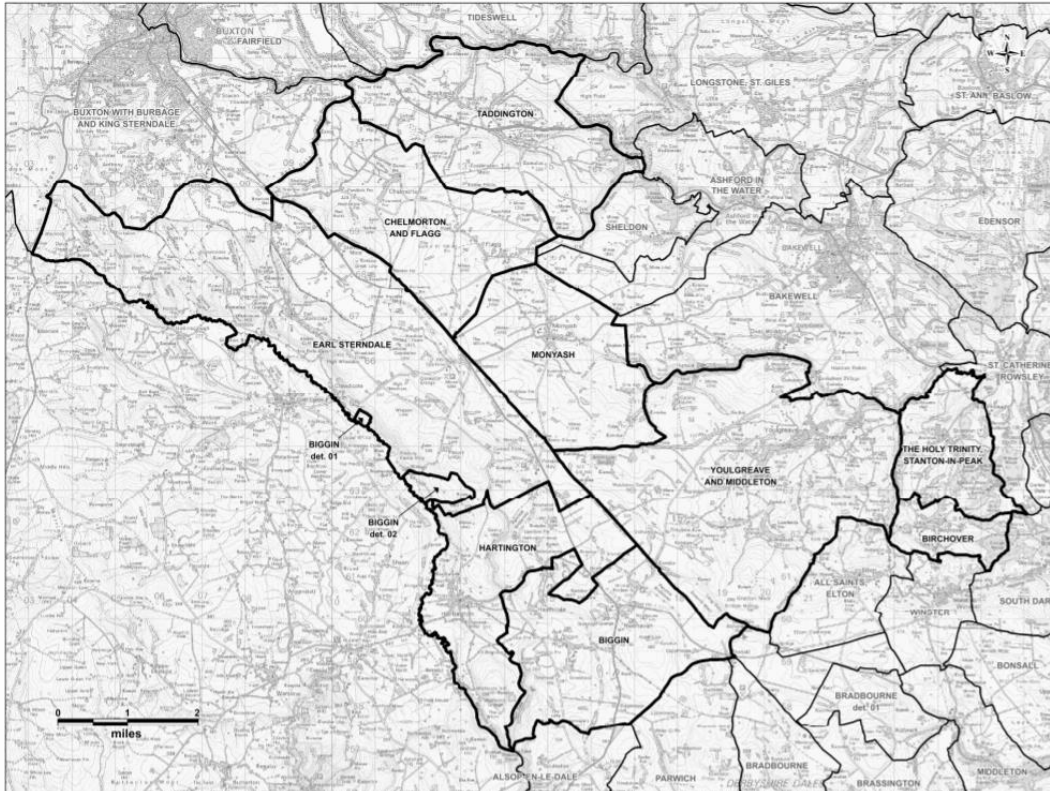


In short, this place provides a fantastic opportunity for you to grow and develop in ministry and a great location to live.

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## The Location of the Parishes

We are bordered by the market town of Bakewell in the South and Buxton in the North. We are in the [Peak Deanery](#), in the [Derby Diocese](#) and are bordered by Lichfield Diocese to the west.



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## White Peak and Youlgrave Benefices

The two benefices have recently come together and comprise the following parishes:

The White Peak Group Benefice comprises six parishes:

- [St Thomas in Biggin](#)
- [St John the Baptist in Chelmorton](#)
- [St Michael and All Angels in Earl Sterndale](#)
- [St Giles in Hartington](#)
- [St Leonard in Monyash](#)
- [St Michael and All Angels in Taddington](#)

The Youlgrave (commonly spelt Youlgrave) Benefice comprises four parishes:

- [St Michael's, Birchover](#)
- [All Saints, Youlgrave](#)
- [St Michael and All Angels, Middleton-by-Youlgrave](#)
- [Holy Trinity, Stanton in Peak](#)

Each of our ten churches has a website (A Church Near You) which provides a helpful source in information about the church, including service times, news, life events, church history and contact details, including safeguarding. To find out more about each of the churches, please select one of the above links.

Both St Thomas, Biggin and St Michael's Birchover are **Festival churches**. A Festival Church is a church building which is not used for weekly worship but is valued and required by the community for local events and for Festivals of the Church and for occasional offices. Each church has at least six services a year, examples include Candlemas (Snowdrop service), Father's Day, Harvest, Remembrance, Lammas Day. As we have flexibility over the services, they tend to be very creative and are designed to be missional in each context.

Each church is distinctive and each sit at the heart of community life. There are good relationships in every context. The following applies to all and highlights our strengths.

- Working together within our churches, and across churches, with a 'can do' attitude
- Creating fellowship and warm, welcoming places of worship
- Knowing our communities and trying to understand their changing needs
- Being sociable!
- Being open and flexible and willing to embrace change What we see as challenges:

There are challenges which face us and we have identified them and are actively working on them.

- Engaging with young people and families
- Diminishing congregations in some of our churches
- Finances
- Understanding and working out God's plan for us all
- Explaining the need for change without causing hurt and pain.

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## **Worship and Ministry**

Over recent decades the village churches have seen the coming together of formerly separate parishes into combined benefices. Many older worshippers can still remember having their own 'vicar,' regardless of the official title. All churches recognise a need to work together and to re-envisage what worship and ministry can be in these days. There is a readiness to embrace change that is needed for the life and ministry of each place to flourish. One rota incorporates all the parishes and is produced quarterly These include working closely with each School, ministering collaboratively between parishes, sharing resources and working alongside the Methodist Church. The Festival Churches engage creatively with their communities for services, and we are exploring Muddy Church, Forest Church, Plough Sunday and potentially having Harvest celebrated on farms.

The style of worship differs across the ten churches from traditional liturgy (BCP/CW) through to more flexible and creative styles. Within the past year we have held Live Nativities, Pet Services, Messy Schools worship to name but a few. We have held festival Services during the Wells weeks as well as being a popular choice for concerts. Music and singing are considered an essential part of all our services. We have a small music group in the Youlgrave Benefice and several regular organists across the benefices. Monyash and Hartington also have a Church Hymnal machine.



Well Blessings at Hartington

Well Blessings at Taddington



Festival weeks

Flower Festival



Pet Services

Jubilee Celebrations at Biggin

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## Harvests

In a rural context with many Farmers – Harvest is a wonderful time. The benefices enjoyed many Harvest Services and many Harvest Suppers...we are hoping to hold one Harvest next year in a barn on a farm!

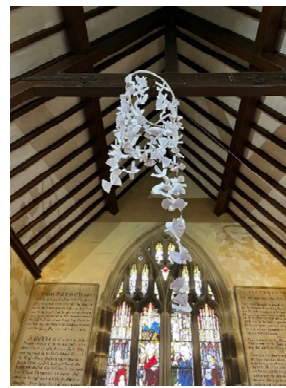
The communities have also embraced Lammas and Biggin is exploring having a Sheep Blessing service.



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## Remembrance

Ten services were held this year across the parishes. This service is incredibly important to the communities and very well attended.



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## Occasional Offices

All the villages still largely regard their church as 'the village church' and thus baptisms, weddings and funerals attract sizeable congregations, often varying with the longevity of residence of participating families. It is not surprising to have a congregation of a few hundred for a funeral in church. Each year we will have several weddings and baptisms. Most baptisms are included in the regular Sunday services. We hope to join Bakewell Parish for confirmation classes and service in 2023.



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## Schools Ministry

There are very good links with the seven Church of England Schools across the parishes. Many opportunities exist - probably only hindered by time available. We already lead Collective Worship, take a lead at Harvest, Remembrance, Christmas and Easter Services, have an Open the Book team and have just started a 'Messy Schools' Together termly activity. In this we work with MAST and together collaboratively across the benefices.

One child from Hartington and one from Youlgrave received the Bishop's badge in 2022. The whole school went to support one recipient!

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## Eco-church

We are in the early stages of forming an Eco Group to work across the benefices with support locally. We have many people across the communities who will engage in this with us – bat surveys, pond cleaning, wildflower sowing, and hedgehog houses all feature on PCC Agendas.

Biggin has already received Bronze Eco award and Hartington will have early in 2023.

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## Ministry Team

Ministry here is collaborative. As we cover a wide area geographically and 10 parishes it is essential that we work flexibly and creatively, supporting each other. Our ministry team:

**Rev'd Adele Barker** is the Priest-in -Charge. We are blessed by the ministry of four retired clergy: **Rev Jane Clay**, **Rev Geoff Clay**, **Rev John Fountain** and **Rev Richard Tucker**. **David Race** is a Licensed Lay Minister with pto, and many Church Wardens and laity are actively involved. Four members across the benefices are starting the Discipleship Mission and Ministry Course.

**Rev Alan Griggs** is the agricultural chaplain who ministers across the parishes. We enjoy working closely with the Bakewell Parish with **Rev Tony Kaunhoven** and **Rev Brenda Jackson**. In addition, we work alongside the surrounding parishes and other churches in the deanery.

As a curate you will bring your own gifts and skills to this committed group of people.



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## **What the role involves**

You will have curacy training to complete and many experiences of ministry during your curacy. Many of these will be necessary for you to undertake and I know that we have a whole wealth of opportunities for you to complete all you need to.

It is very important to me that you can shape a sustainable pattern to ministry. Family and friends are important and maintaining healthy relationships where you are known and supported is vital. I will therefore encourage you to develop a good rhythm of life and shape of ministry.

### **In addition, we can offer:**

- Shared mission and ministry across the parishes. You will be a bringer of good news to communities and enabled to help shape mission in each village. My desire is to see each place flourish and grow both spiritually and numerically.
- The opportunity to lead worship across 10 parishes. All the churches are beautiful, and it is a privilege to minister in each one of them.
- You will continue to grow and develop in leading using Common Worship and associated liturgies. We also are introducing a variety of worship styles including Celtic prayer and Taize, amongst others.
- There is much opportunity for creative worship including development of Messy Church, Muddy Church and Wild church...
- Occasional Offices – there are two or three funeral services a month; 6 weddings are booked for next year as are two baptisms. There will be much opportunity for ministry in these along with the mission opportunities they provide.
- Pastoral ministry – Communion is taken to the ill and housebound. You will be able to work in any of the parishes as opportunity arises.
- Schools Ministry – you will be able to work with other ministers and lead independently across the network of schools that we have relationship with. There is much scope for development here.
- Community and Civic events – the Well Blessings, Festival Weeks and Remembrance services are attended by many. You will be able to lead in a variety of contexts.
- Collaborative ministry – you will work with a wide variety of people. We work ecumenically.
- Small Groups – there is one small group in Hartington that meets regularly, but potential for more. I hope that there will be opportunity to develop home groups or small bible groups.



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## **About the Vicar: The Rev'd Adele Barker**



I am delighted to have been given the opportunity to welcome a curate to the White Peak and Youlgrave Benefices. This place offers the potential to experience rural ministry at its best. The communities are vibrant and welcoming, the people are friendly, supportive and generous, the countryside breathtakingly beautiful and the central location in England enables easy transport to many large cities. Rural ministry isn't quiet; it is varied and creative and the church is valued highly in each place. I will welcome fresh approaches and ideas as there is much opportunity to try new shapes and styles of ministry.

I have recently relocated to the Diocese of Derby from Rochester Diocese which was my sending Diocese. I trained for ministry at Ridley Hall, Cambridge before serving my curacy in St Philip and St James, Walderslade which is an evangelical church. Following my curacy, I served my first post in the parishes of Fawkham and Hartley and Longfield which worked closely with the parishes of Ash and Ridley to form the Rural North West Kent Group. These parishes were semi-rural, commuter belt and of a central tradition. I felt a strong call to this post where I have been since May 2022.

The role is one where I am helping to shape ministry across the benefices for the future. This means that change will come in some shape or form over the next few years. My remit very much includes being an enabler and an encourager for ministry and mission to flourish across the benefices. To this end working collaboratively is key as is being willing to listen to the stories of the churches and the people to help understand the past to enable that shaping for the future.

I have been shaped in both the Anglo-Catholic tradition and charismatic and evangelical contexts. Before my journey to ordination as a family we worshipped together at our local village church and a large town evangelical church in Sevenoaks. I would describe myself as open-evangelical, charismatic and catholic... Influences that have shaped my spirituality include the Ignatian tradition, having completed the spiritual exercises and contemplative spirituality. I am an avid reader and love learning and my MA dissertation was on Celtic Spirituality and liturgy. I am a Spiritual Director and mentor. I should also add that I am a qualified chartered accountant, have worked as a stock-broker and in the Finance team at OMF International!

I am married to Jeremy who works in Leeds and we have four adult sons. We have two dogs, keep chickens, love walking and cycling (Jeremy), travel, the creative arts and good food, wine and beer.

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## **Support during your curacy**

We are praying for a curate, and I do not doubt that you will receive a very warm welcome from each parish and community should this be where you come. Curacy is a very formative time with opportunity to put structures in place that will help you develop a good and sustainable pattern of ministry.

Prayer is central to all we are and to all we do and nurturing and sustaining your relationship with God is essential. As we work together to help you shape your ministry there are opportunities for development which include:

- Regular study and theological reflection
- Peer support and pastoral supervision groups
- Opportunity to meet regularly with a spiritual director/mentor
- CMD training events

It is also essential that you take regular holidays (36 days a year, including 6 Sundays), that you have a rest day every week plus two days of rest once a month and take regular retreats and quiet days.

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## **Getting in touch**

If you would be interested in exploring this post further, please contact any of the below:

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**I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.**

*John 10:10*



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**THE KINGDOM OF GOD - GOOD NEWS FOR ALL**