



St Mark's Church, Reigate Parish Profile

January 2014

www.stmarksreigate.co.uk



Overview

St Mark's is a well-attended church in the Anglo-Catholic tradition, set in a pleasant residential area of North Reigate. The appointment of a new vicar marks the next phase in the development and delivery of our mission, as we look towards a number of opportunities for growth.

First, we know that the population of our parish is likely to rise significantly over the next 15 years, as the area has been identified by the local authority as suitable for extra housing. Second, our recent parish consultation revealed that our congregation is seeking spiritual growth and is naturally looking to the church for guidance. Third, St Mark's is keen to grow by reaching out and creating stronger links in the community, broadening our mission as a church for people who live, work, and study locally.

We are looking for a vicar who, with support from the ministry team and the congregation, is able to take our church forward to meet these and other challenges that will be heading our way.

Reigate



Reigate town centre

Reigate is an ancient market town dating back to around 1150, sitting just under Colley Hill (230m) on the edge of the North Downs. It is part of the wider urban area of Reigate and Redhill, with a population of approximately 22,000 out of a total of 48,000. It lies just outside the M25 and to the north of Gatwick Airport. Reigate has a 13th century priory in the centre of the town, now a junior school, surrounded by Priory Park which covers an area of 90 acres.



Reigate Priory with its park

Good rail and road links mean that many residents commute to work in London or across the south-east. There are several large financial services employers in the town, including Esure, Just Retirement and Towers Watson. Kimberley Clark has its UK base in Reigate and Canon is also an employer.

Reigate attracts people moving out of London, particularly for its local schools, both independent and state, which are well-regarded. The town centre has a Morrisons supermarket, a Marks & Spencer food store and a two-screen cinema. Its plentiful coffee shops and restaurants cater for a relatively affluent population. The population has higher levels of education than the national average and higher income than average. Crime rates are generally low.

St Mark's parish

The parish lies in the ward of Reigate Hill and stretches from the Reading-Gatwick railway line in the south to the crest of the North Downs and from The Clears in the west to Wray Lane in the east. The parish is mostly residential, along with a small number of local businesses. Housing is predominantly detached and semi-detached, with infill developments of apartments.

An important point to note is that the Borough of Reigate and Banstead is regarded as a centre for population expansion in the south-east. Reigate itself is targeted for approximately 280 to 980 new dwellings by 2027, with the ward of Reigate Hill identified as a focus for development, as it currently has relatively low-density housing. A number of roads within the parish have been identified as specific areas for expanding the number of dwellings. This means we are likely to see a significant expansion in the population of the parish in the next decade. It is likely that apartment blocks will be built on the site of semi-detached and detached housing.

Appendix 1 shows a map of the area with the parish boundaries marked.

The latest available figures for the ward of Reigate Hill show a population of around 5,000, with 72.6% describing themselves as Christian (2001 census). For the elderly, there are several residential homes and blocks of retirement apartments. Holmesdale Community Infant School, Brooklands School for children with learning difficulties and Micklefield School (independent) are located in the parish. They all have strong links with St Mark's Church, visiting for Christmas and Harvest Services, as well as for educational visits. Our previous vicar held assemblies at Micklefield and Holmesdale on a regular basis and our curate continues this practice.

St Mark's Church



St Mark's Church

The parish church of Reigate, St Mary's in Chart Lane (12th century, a large and thriving evangelical church), built 4 daughter churches in the second half of the 19th century to cater for the rapidly expanding population in Redhill and Reigate, with the coming of the railway. These churches, which soon became parishes in their own right, are St Matthew's and St John's in Redhill and St Mark's and St Luke's in Reigate. St Mark's Church was consecrated in 1860 and had a spire which had to be removed in 1919. The tower is floodlit from dusk to 11 pm.

The church is built of Reigate stone in the Victorian Gothic tradition, with seating on pews for around 300. It is a local landmark and has a high level of visibility to the large numbers of pedestrians passing the building, particularly families on their way to local schools and residents walking to the station.

Inside the church, there is a high altar, a moveable nave altar, a Lady Chapel, a dedicated children's corner and an outer and inner vestry, with Wi-Fi. It has warm air heating. The bell tower contains three bells which are rung together on Christmas Day and Easter Day by a member of the congregation. One of the bells is rung before and during services and the clock bell strikes on the hour between 7am and 10pm. The gardens around the church are used for the burial of ashes.

Our organ was built in 1899 by the then foremost organ builder of the day, Henry Willis. During February 1969 it suffered water damage during a severe storm and was subsequently rebuilt. It is much loved by our congregation and is a considerable asset to us for use by outside music groups.

The church is open every day.

A hall was added in the 1960s and is attached to the church by a foyer. It has one large hall area with a stage and two smaller meeting rooms, all used extensively by the church and local groups, including a weekly Mother and Toddler group and a popular ballet school. The car park provides valuable income for the church, being hired during working hours by a local business.

The church and hall are looked after by our Church Centre Committee, which is made up of volunteers from our congregation. The Committee oversees the day-to-day running of the hall and manages the letting of both it and the church. The Committee also takes care of regular maintenance and larger capital projects for the Church Centre. The Church Centre provides significant income from letting fees and plays an important role in enabling St Mark's to act as a venue for the benefit of the community.

The First World War memorial to the side of the church has been adopted by us and we installed a flagpole in 2012 which was donated by a church member. One of our congregation has responsibility for lowering and raising flags on significant dates.



Remembrance Day service around the memorial

St Mark's Church has an Anglo-Catholic tradition, without being extremely High Church. Many of the churches in the immediate area are Low Church and St Mark's, along with St Matthew's in Redhill and St Philip's in Reigate, provides an alternative for those who feel comfortable with our style of worship. As a result, around half of our congregation is drawn from outside the parish. St Mark's has an ethos of welcoming people from all backgrounds, meeting them wherever they are in their own lives and we have members with a wide range of churchmanship. There is strong support for women in the ministry amongst the congregation and the ministry team.

To help us in our search for a new vicar and to enable us to think carefully about the future direction of St Mark's, we recently asked our congregation and others about what they value and what they want to see strengthened. A summary of the findings are shown at **Appendix 2**. These comments reflect some of the main themes that emerged:

Things people valued:

"I value very much the type of worship we have here. It's something very special"

"I value the fact that all traditions of worship are catered for during the weekly services"

"Fantastic junior church due to high energy and commitment of teachers"

"...the sense that St Mark's as a community is 'liberal' "

"The fellowship of the church congregation – and offer to all ages in such an inclusive way"

We were pleased that our recent survey endorsed our broad pattern of worship.



Our recent Harvest lunch

Our services

We are proud to have a broad range of services, with a team of helpers from clergy and laity alike.

Our main service is a sung Eucharist held at 10am on Sundays (approximate number of attendees 65 – 130). Junior Church members (between 15-40 children) stay for the initial part of the service and return for communion. Members of the congregation help in many ways, for example, as sidesmen, as servers, as readers and as intercessors, as well as helping out in Junior Church or with the crèche.

Our readers take it in turns to preach at the 10am service once a month. Some of our teenagers are servers and other teenagers help in Junior Church. Laying-on of hands is available at the 8am and 10am services once a month.

Our ministry team wears vestments for every service and we use incense at some major festivals. We hold mid-week services for Ascension Day, All Souls' and similar festivals. See **Appendix 3** for a recent calendar of services and events.



Some of our 10am serving team

On third Sundays the 10am service takes the form of a more informal family service, with Junior Church leading the prayers and performing dramatised versions of the gospel reading. Music and singing are provided by a small group of adults and children. We use a discreet, permanent multi-media projector screen during this service instead of booklets and hymn books.

Our 8am Sunday service follows the Book of Common Prayer, except on first Sundays when it follows Common Worship, without hymns (apart from Easter Day and Christmas Day) (approximate number in the congregation 15-20). The sermon for the 8am service is generally preached again at the 10am service.

Our 6pm Sunday service usually rotates as follows, with approximate congregation numbers in brackets:

1st Sunday Evening Prayer (BCP) (10)

2nd Sunday Taizé Prayer (20)

3rd Sunday Evening Prayer (BCP) (10)

4th Sunday Choral Evensong with the boys and men of the Geoffrey Searle Choir (the frequency of this depends on school holidays) (25)

5th Sunday Evening Prayer (BCP) (10)

We also have regular Morning Prayer at 8.30am on Tuesday to Friday, a small prayer gathering on Tuesday at 9am and a Thursday lunchtime Iona-style Eucharist with a bring-your-own lunch afterwards (around 8 attendees).

Our popular 'T' Time Tales service runs every Wednesday during term-time for children aged up to approximately 7, with around 40 children and 10 parents or carers attending.

Confirmation courses have been held annually for a number of years. The average number of confirmation candidates over the past 3 years was 7, with baptisms of 12, weddings of 3 and funerals of 16. Our curate and readers take communion to the sick and visit a number of residential and nursing homes.



Our curate and readers

Music at St Mark's

St Mark's Church has a distinctive reputation for music through its strong tradition of music in services and its support of local music groups. In our services we use a mix of hymns from the New English Hymnal and Mission Praise hymn books. We have an organist and a choir of around 8 adults. Within the congregation there is a breadth of musical talent, with harpist, trumpeters and organists.

The Eucharistic prayer and responses are sung during the 10am service, with the exception of the family service on the 3rd Sunday.

St Mark's Church is frequently used by local music groups as its size, acoustics, organ and hall combine to make it an excellent local venue. Buckland and Betchworth Choir, Dunottar School Choir, Reigate Grammar School Community Choir and Cantamus all use the church on a regular basis. In particular, Cantamus has supported our own choir for a number of years at the All Souls' Service. We are keen to maintain these links.

Our congregation

Our Electoral Roll currently stands at 183.

Our congregation has a strong culture of volunteering to help with the various roles in church. We always have lots of helpers at work days or at services where lots of hands are needed. Attendance tends to be frequent and social events are enjoyed and well-supported. This is something that was very evident in our recent survey.



Spring cleaning the church

One particular aspect of our congregation is the number of families involved in the church. Our local state secondary school, St Bede's in Redhill, is an ecumenical school with children from Anglican and Roman Catholic faiths as well as from the local Free Churches.

Admission to the school requires parents to participate actively in the life of their church, and to attend regularly (more often than fortnightly). This means that we have lots of families attending with children of primary school age. We try to involve these parents in a variety of roles, particularly outside Junior Church, in order to keep their attendance at St Mark's once the children have started at St Bede's.

Other groups associated with our congregation include the Mothers' Union (approximate membership 20) and SMART (St Mark's Afternoon Retirement Group) (approximate attendance 12) both of which meet once a month. In addition, we have a Men's Group which holds periodic social meetings open to all men within the congregation. We also hold a community lunch on second Sundays for elderly or vulnerable people living alone. Members of the church help with food preparation, transport etc for this group.

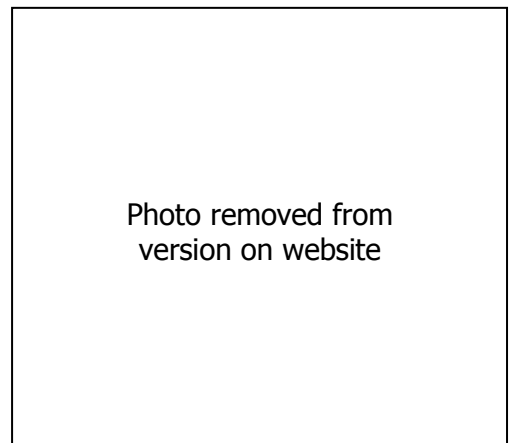


Our curate preaching

We have a very well-run social committee who organise the annual barbeque, the autumn harvest lunch and other social gatherings during the year. We have also held a Seder meal in recent years.



Chefs at the annual BBQ



Beating the bounds

The annual report for 2012, which gives a full picture of all activities and groups, is included at **Appendix 4.**

Communication

We keep in touch with our congregation in a variety of ways. We have a weekly newssheet which is produced by the Secretary of the PCC/organist and a monthly magazine produced by one of the congregation. We also use email to keep people up-to-date. We have recently launched a new website which we shall be developing further over the coming months.

Outside giving

The congregation supports several local charities through outside-giving from general church funds, fundraising activities and also through special collections during the year. In 2013 our special collections were for Combat Stress on Remembrance Sunday, and Surrey Young Carers, the Salvation Army and Reigate Samaritans at Christmas. We were instrumental in having Sparkfish, a local charity focused on faith in local schools, included in the Bishop's 2013 Lent Appeal.

We have recently revived the practice of holding an Autumn Fair to raise money for our outside-giving causes. This raised around £1,200 in each of 2012 and 2013.

One of our previous incumbents helped to found St Mark's Overseas Aid Trust (SMOAT) in 1980. SMOAT is an independent charity with strong links to St Mark's, but is non-denominational and has supporters from different religious and secular backgrounds. It is active in fundraising and supports a number of aid projects in developing countries.

Our links with other churches

We have links with other churches in the Reigate area through Churches Together. There are joint activities, for example, the annual Carol Service at The Belfry shopping centre in Redhill and the Night Shelter during the winter months. Local youth services are held, recently under the auspices of Sparkfish. Local churches have also come together to form Street Pastors, although no-one from St Mark's is helping at the moment. Welcare is strongly supported by our congregation, both financially and through volunteer time. Regular ecumenical clergy breakfasts also take place in Reigate.

We would like to see stronger links between St Mark's and other churches, in particular to help with our mission work in the local community. Our recent survey identified this as an area that we need to strengthen.

Management of the church

We have been blessed with the help of Rev'd Sue Weakley, our Non-Stipendiary Curate, during the vacancy period. She is assisted by our team of three readers and our Southwark Pastoral Auxillary (SPA).

We have established a Pastoral Vacancy Team to support the curate during the vacancy. This comprises the ministry team of curate, three readers, SPA and some of the more experienced members of the congregation. The latter have the role of keeping their ears to the ground to identify any members of the congregation who might value pastoral support as well as undertaking pastoral sick or other visiting.



Our PCC in session in the hall

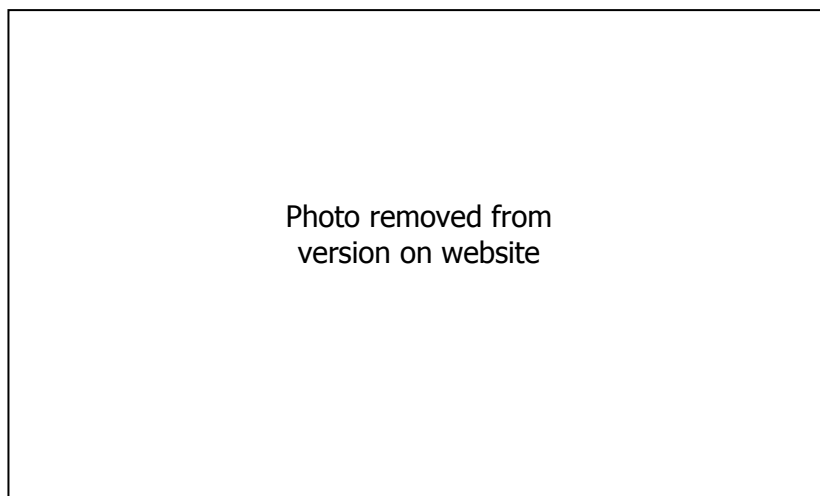


Some of our churchwarden team

Our PCC membership currently stands at 22. The PCC meets every two months and the ministry team meets at least once a month during the vacancy. Our churchwardens generally hold office for 3 years and we currently have four deputy wardens. Please see **Appendix 5** for the list of PCC members and the various committees. A copy of the minutes of a recent PCC meeting is shown at **Appendix 6**.

The parish office is staffed for 12 hours a week by a paid employee. We have a caretaker for the hall and the church who lives in a house owned by us. Working parties are organized to spring clean the church before Easter and to tackle maintenance that can be carried out by members of the congregation.

We have recently had a youth worker from South Korea, who was placed with us through "Time for God" but who returned home in December 2013. He helped out in a variety of ways, including with Junior Church, with our youth group Chums, with our monthly community lunch and by doing various odd jobs, including mowing the church lawns. We are currently recruiting locally to fill the gap that has been created by his departure.



Our youth group Chums

Our finances

During 2012 St Mark's had total income of £176,000 with total expenditure of £167,000, resulting in a £9,000 surplus (compared with an £11,000 deficit in 2011). Within this the hall operated a small surplus (£4,000) and our overall position was boosted by income from letting the car park (£22,000). We have undertaken a number of projects in recent years to maintain the stonework of the church as Reigate stone is a poor-quality material. We renovated the toilets in the church hall in 2011 and upgraded part of the hall heating at the same time. We are currently in the third year of our Quinquennial report with no significant expenditure planned as most of the scheduled works are minor. Our reserves stood at £140,000 at 31 December 2012.

Our annual gift day has raised over £15,000 a year for each of the past 3 years. Our "Fairer Shares" contribution to the Diocese amounts to £97,000 for 2013. We have always paid our contribution.

Please refer to **Appendix 4** for our financial report for 2012.

The vicarage

The vicarage is a detached house situated next to the church and has four bedrooms (three double, one single). It has a family bathroom, an en-suite to the main bedroom and a downstairs cloakroom. It has a sitting room, dining room and a study and a new kitchen is being fitted. It also has a garage and off-street parking for two cars. It has a small garden to the front and a larger, level one to the rear. The central heating is gas-fired. **Appendix 7** gives details of local state schools.



The vicarage

What challenges will our new vicar face?

St Mark's is ideally placed to benefit from the likely increase in population in our parish and will need to focus upon ways in which it can be attractive to new members of the congregation. This is likely to be a very important part of our ministry in the coming years.

Our recent consultation with our congregation and other stakeholders has enabled us to identify a number of areas in the life of St Mark's that people feel need strengthening.

It is clear that the overwhelming majority of people want our approach to churchmanship and our inclusive approach to stay broadly the same. We would like to appoint a vicar who is sympathetic to these views and comfortable working within this framework, whilst willing to think creatively about how to take St Mark's forward.

Within that context, one key aspect that people want to develop is our outreach into the surrounding community. Whilst there are a number of local charities with which St Mark's engages, for example the Women's Refuge, a large part of our input is financial rather than practical. There is a sense that as a church we are very good at looking after our own flock, but not necessarily as good at reaching out to others in the immediate locality. The congregation does however support international aid through SMOAT and OASIS, a junior school in Kenya.

One respondent said "*I wish we helped more within the community*". This was echoed by others.

Respondents also identified a need for deeper spiritual discussion and teaching. For instance, some want to see home groups strengthened: "*more should be done to build Bible study groups*" whilst others want to see more opportunity for evening lectures, perhaps with outside speakers. The desire for a greater level of spiritual challenge is evident. It will be crucial for the new incumbent to take this forward to enable us to "*..have intellectual/intelligent stimulus around Bible/Spiritual life/life generally*".



The Lady Chapel

The strong musical tradition of St Mark's is important to many of our congregation and the future of the choir is a concern to many. Most of our choir are over 70 years old and there is a strong desire to see children, teenagers and parents involved in singing on a regular basis: "A larger choir. It would be good to have some younger singers involved".

Other areas that respondents feel need attention include those hard-to-reach groups, such as older teenagers and boys in particular. In addition, people feel that younger members of the congregation should be brought more fully into the running of the church.

The consultation has been a valuable exercise for us in establishing a culture of a "listening church". We would wish it to be a regular undertaking, perhaps every 3 to 4 years.

Person specification

We have taken time during the vacancy to consider carefully what sort of vicar we should seek.

We are looking for someone who:

- can lead us, enabling the wealth of talent, skills and goodwill in the congregation and Ministry Team to thrive and develop
- has a sympathetic approach to pastoral care and understands the ups and downs of family life
- can stimulate and educate us in our journey in faith
- can enter into the musical life at St Mark's, particularly in the Sung Eucharist
- has good organisational skills, with experience of managing in a parish
- has excellent communication skills, including preaching, and is used to communicating electronically
- has a healthy sense of perspective and finds fun in life.

Job description

Along with the usual parish duties, we have identified the following pillars of ministry for our new vicar, to be achieved by leading, managing and inspiring others drawn from the parish staff, laity and ministry team.

Spiritual and pastoral

- Lead and facilitate a variety of forms of worship, remaining sympathetic to the Anglo-Catholic tradition of St Mark's Church
- Enable all sections of the congregation to deepen their understanding of their faith through Christian teaching that will inspire and encourage them in their journey, including amongst other things the organisation of lectures and courses, as well as initially facilitating house groups
- Work closely with the ministry team, fostering their spiritual development and ministry skills, including undertaking annual reviews with team members

- Encourage the involvement of children and young people in the life of St Mark's
- Provide general pastoral care to those in need of support or guidance, working with the ministry team and laity to ensure this need is met. Ensure that communion is taken to the sick when required and that local retirement care homes are visited regularly
- Foster good working relations with local churches and clergy in Reigate and Redhill

Develop outreach

- Lead St Mark's in the development of its ministry to the community, working with other churches as appropriate
- Develop ministry to teenagers and other under-represented age groups at St Mark's
- Foster positive links with the schools within our parish, including making the church available for services and other events, taking part where requested. Involvement in the life of the schools as appropriate

Management of the parish

- Foster the musical life at St Mark's Church, including working with the choir leader to help rejuvenate the choir and supporting musical events at the church
- Manage the development of communication with parishioners and other key groups, through the website, newssheet, magazine and other media
- Demonstrate good employment practice with parish employees, including regular performance appraisals
- Be mindful of good financial stewardship and lead the parish by example in pursuit of this

An application form and all other documents are available from:

The Bishop of Croydon
 St Matthew's House
 100 George Street
 Croydon
 Surrey CR0 1PE
 Telephone: 020 8256 9633
 Email: susan.wheeler@southwark.anglican.org

The appointment is subject to an enhanced DBS check.

The closing date for applications is 5 February 2014.

A parish visit day will be held on 27 February 2014, although we can be flexible.

Interviews will be held on **28 February 2014** at St Matthew's House.

Thank you for reading this Parish Profile. We have been as honest as we can. We are looking forward to hearing from you.

Nicola Lloyd and Nigel Perkins
 Churchwardens



List of appendices

Appendix 1	Map showing parish boundary
Appendix 2	Summary of responses to questionnaire – September 2013
Appendix 3	Church calendar of services September – December 2013
Appendix 4	Annual report including financial report 2012
Appendix 5	PCC members (with roles) and committees for 2013/14
Appendix 6	Copy of PCC minutes 11 September 2013
Appendix 7	List of local schools