

# CHURCH OF ST OSWALD, KING & MARTYR OSWESTRY



and CHRISTCHURCH, RHYDYCROESAU

## Parish Profile

# MINISTRY PROFILE FOR BOTH PARISHES

We are looking to appoint a prayerful, faith-led priest, who will maintain the nurture of our existing church family while helping us reach out to the community of our parishes and encourage our discipleship through teaching and prayer.

## He or she will need to:

- Be an empathetic listener and a good communicator and teacher, who is friendly, sociable, welcoming and inclusive.
- Be an effective and collaborative team leader.
- Continue to nurture and progress the spiritual gifts of the laity which we have been developing in recent years.
- Help us find new ways to share our faith beyond the walls of the church.
- Continue our close links with the Deanery and Churches Together in Oswestry District.

## If you feel that God is calling you to this post, we can offer you:

- ❖ Active, caring, supportive and inclusive congregations.
- ❖ Support of several retired clergy and three Readers.
- ❖ The services of a paid Administrator.
- ❖ An opportunity to work in both an attractive market town and a lively village in beautiful unspoilt countryside. *(See Appendix 1 for local websites.)*

The two Parishes have different traditions: Christchurch, Rhydycroesau, worships in a simpler style than St Oswald's.

The combination of market town centre parish church and small rural parish gives ideal training opportunities for curacy and this has been recognised by the Diocese.

St Oswald's is a Covenanted Parish in Shared Leadership.

## The Vicarage

The Vicarage is a 1970s purpose-built four-bedroomed house situated some 5 minutes' walk from St Oswald's. Structurally sound and in good repair, it will be re-decorated to meet the requirements of the new incumbent. It is a comfortable home with large gardens at front and back. The back garden is fully enclosed and includes a pond, five mature fruit trees, raspberries, a small vegetable plot and a wild area. In recent years the Patronal Festival lunch has been held in the Vicarage garden.



# THE PARISH OF ST OSWALD, KING AND MARTYR

We are an inclusive church and believe that the love of God is open to all.

## MISSION STATEMENT

THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST OSWALD, KING & MARTYR  
exists to propagate and nurture the love of God  
through the teaching of Jesus Christ  
thereby serving the needs of the whole community  
and enriching everyone's lives, through worship and prayer.

## Church Policy

**Baptism.** We have an open policy with regard to those seeking baptism for their children or themselves. We welcome any enquiries and we seek first to build up a relationship with the family or the individual, as part of the preparation for the baptism. Families are asked to attend one of our Baptism Preparation sessions, which we usually hold every two months.



**Holy Communion.** The PCC has recently agreed to admit children to Holy Communion from the age of seven after a short period of preparation.

Confirmation is usually offered from the age of thirteen.

**Marriage.** St Oswald's is a popular wedding venue. The current practice is to allow the marriage of divorced people at the Vicar's discretion.

We are beginning to explore what it means to be a dementia-friendly church.

We do all we can to make our buildings and worship fully accessible to those with disabilities, including wheelchair access to the altar rail, a hearing loop and large-print service booklets.

## Worship and Prayer

St Oswald's enjoys a high standard of worship in a broadly central Anglican tradition using Common Worship and BCP (*see Appendix 2 for details and pattern of services*). Average Sunday attendance is about 168. Many of our services are enhanced by the Choir and organ and are supported by acolytes and servers. There are ten people licensed to administer the chalice. Lay-leadership, for example of study and prayer groups, is encouraged. A group meets monthly to plan our All-Age services around a CW framework. Other forms of worship and prayer include:

Messy Church, Bible study groups,  
Life and Faith group, 10:10 prayer group,  
Prayer and Care group, Franciscan prayers,

Community of St Oswald prayer breakfast,

Under-5s Group service,

Home communions and residential home visits using the Reserved Sacrament.

**Seasonal activities** include

Oswald's Tree – an annual teaching and consultation day. Lent groups. Quiet days. Invitations sent to bereaved families for the All Souls memorial service.

**The Choir.** Music plays a very important part in the life of the church. The cathedral-quality choir has an impressive repertoire which supports the liturgy at most of the main services.

It has a thriving treble section of 14 boys and girls who take part in the RSCM Voice for Life scheme. There are two Chorister Scholarships per annum (carrying an 85% remission of fees) at Oswestry School. The Choir is completed by 16 adults singing alto, tenor and bass.

The Director of Music is assisted by a talented Organist and there is a very fine three manual and pedal organ built by William Hill and fully restored in 2014. Special Sequences of Music are sung for Candlemas, Passion Sunday and Remembrance Sunday and there are also occasional concerts and an annual organ recital. St Oswald's also hosts an annual 'Come and Sing' on Palm Sunday.



**Pastoral Care Network.** Mindful that pastoral care is more effective when it is shared amongst the whole congregation rather than centralised with a small team, and that caring for one another across the church doesn't (and can't) depend on the clergy, Pastoral Care Groups have been set up to help us better care for one another.

Coordinators work (mostly) in pairs, each pair 'looking out for' approximately 10-12 people – how each group functions depends on the needs and lives of its members.

*'The whole body depends on Christ, and all the parts of the body are joined and held together. Each part does its own work to make the whole body grow and be strong with love.'*

*Ephesians 4:16*

## Outreach

*How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?*

*ROMANS 10:14*

The outreach activities of the parish include: Baptism preparation teas, invitations to baptism families for child-friendly services, Messy Church, Open Door (school visits), school assemblies and sending invitations to the All Souls memorial service. We aim to provide good publicity for major services so Easter and Christmas cards (printed in-house) are delivered to as many homes as possible in the Parish.

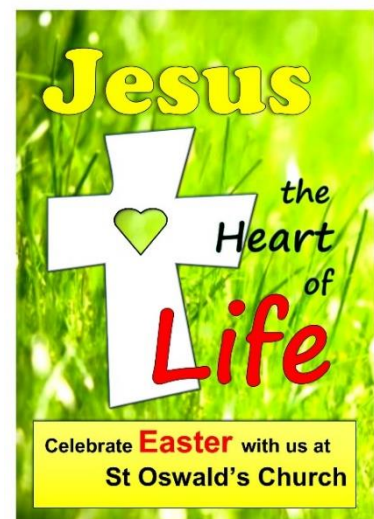
Outreach is an area that we hope to expand.

A new venture will be our appointment of a Children and Families Worker and we look forward to our new Vicar helping us to develop and use this resource, building on the contacts we have been establishing over the past few years.

The Mission and Ministry Team, with the Parish priest, acts as a focus group to develop new initiatives in the outreach and life of the church, an example being our planned 'Open Day of Prayer' for the town in May. One member is a representative for the Parish on the Shrewsbury Area Faith-Sharing Team.

## Communications

St Oswald's has a website <http://www.stoswaldsoswestry.org.uk> and can be found on Facebook at 'St Oswald's Parish Church Oswestry'. Our monthly magazine is shared with Rhydygroesau and has a circulation of over 200. It is produced in-house using our own excellent printing facilities. A weekly pewslip is given out at services and posters and fliers printed to advertise specific events.



## Our Parish Family

**The Social Committee** and their helpers hold a variety of enjoyable functions throughout the year. Some raise funds for the church or for particular charities, for example Lent and Christian Aid Lunches, while some are to promote fellowship and friendship within the parish.



**Ladies Group.** The Ladies Group consists of about 40 members from the church family and beyond with the aim of providing support for each other in friendship and fellowship. An evening meeting is held monthly in the Parish Centre, opening with prayer and usually with an informative/entertaining speaker. There are also annual outings and a dinner. Members are always willing helpers at church functions.

**Mothers' Union.** There is no longer a Branch at St Oswald's but several members have transferred their memberships to the Gobowen Branch which meets monthly. We still retain our Mothers' Union banner in the Lady Chapel and keep an updated notice board.



**Bellringers.** An unmissable way in which the Church makes its presence known in the town is by the ringing of the church bells.

St Oswald's has a fine peal of eight well-maintained bells which are rung for morning and evening services on Sundays. We have a reliable and competent band which practises on Thursday nights and has strong links with the Shropshire Association of Bellringers. Quarter peals are frequently rung for services and special occasions, and a simulator has been installed which allows extra practice without disturbing the neighbours! We are starting to train some younger ringers and hope to encourage more in the future.

**The Friends of St Oswald's.** The PCC has agreed that we set up a 'Friends of St Oswald's' – an independent group with the aim of encouraging interest in and support for the building and architecture of the church and environs. Charity Commission approval is to be sought and a full programme of social and educational events is envisaged.

## Town and Parish

**The Town.** A historic town near to the border of England and Wales, Oswestry is within 30 minutes of Shrewsbury and Chester. Employment is mainly focussed on services, light industry and retail. The population has a high proportion of retired people but in recent years there has been a significant expansion of housebuilding bringing in new residents. For a small town, it has a surprising variety of cultural experiences to offer, including live professional and amateur music and drama, a small cinema, a literary festival and food and drink festivals.



**The Parish of St Oswald, King and Martyr.** The population of the parish is around 10,600 people, largely white British although there is an increasing number of Eastern European residents. The socio-economic composition of the parish covers a wide range. Some areas in the town centre score highly on the Index of Multiple Deprivation. A much-needed Food Bank has been set up by the churches in the town. For a detailed profile of the parish see the Church Urban Fund's look-up tool at <http://www2.cuf.org.uk/lookup-tool>

However, the present congregation does not reflect the town's demographic, with an older church family. We see our main challenges as filling the gap in our church membership between young and old and discovering how we might reach more widely into the community. Around 15 per cent of those on the Electoral Roll live outside the boundary of the parish and a growing number live at some distance, in the surrounding rural area and over the border into Wales. *(See Appendix 3 for more Facts & Figures.)*

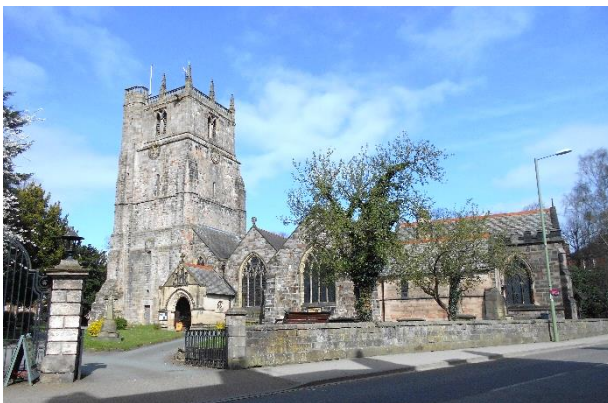
The church is recognised in the town as having a civic function. Most in-coming mayors hold a Civic Service here and the incumbent is often invited to be their Mayoral Chaplain. Prayers are said at Town Council meetings. The Remembrance Sunday Service is organised in conjunction with the Town Council who invite local dignitaries and representatives of uniformed organisations. Occasional special civic services have been held, such as that to mark the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

We are one of twenty local churches that comprise Churches Together in Oswestry District.

Although geographically remote from the cathedral at Lichfield, we are well supported by our area bishop and our representatives regularly attend Deanery Synod meetings.

**Schools.** We have a close relationship with Morda C of E (VC) School. It is a smaller-than-average primary school rated Good by Ofsted in June 2014 and also Good by SIAMS in May 2015. The percentage of pupils supported by the pupil premium is below average. The Vicar leads a weekly act of worship in the school and pupils come into church for a special service at Christmas, Easter and at the end of the school year. The Vicar is an ex-officio governor at the school. There is also a good relationship with the nearby independent Oswestry School (ages 2-18) and the present Vicar is a member of the governing body. The town is served by The Marches secondary school which has about 1,300 pupils and four other primary schools.

## The Church: Buildings and Leadership



**The Church.** St Oswald's is mediaeval in origin but largely re-ordered in Victorian times. A large church, it seats about 750 people. The Lady Chapel is used for smaller services and St Catherine's Chapel is set aside for private prayer and study groups.

The Buildings and Fabric Committee ensures that the church is maintained to a high standard. The congregation cares about the building and historically has responded well to fundraising appeals. Volunteers carry out many routine maintenance tasks and running repairs, and there are rotas for church cleaning.

There is excellent disabled access and we are fully compliant with Health and Safety legislation.

The church is open every day as a sacred space for the town. Welcomers are on duty during the summer months to greet visitors.

**The Churchyard** is closed to new burials and is maintained by the Town Council.

**The Parish Centre.** Linked to the main church building, and opened in 1974, the spacious centre offers two rooms for church and community use and a well-equipped kitchen. Well used by parish organisations it is also let to other groups in the town and for private functions. There is a disabled toilet and a lift access to the main hall. A defibrillator is sited outside the main door.





**Churchwardens.** There are four Churchwardens and also a number of deputies who lighten the load.

**The PCC and subcommittees.** There are 19 members of the PCC: it meets every second month with a Standing Committee of 9 members available to meet more frequently if required. Functions have been devolved to subcommittees comprising both PCC members and others from the congregation (*see Appendix 4*). The PCC has appointed advisors on Child Protection and Health and Safety.

**Finances.** The parish has a strong balance-sheet and has paid its parish share on time for many years. We are aware of significant costs in respect of the Quinquennial which we hope to finance through our own resources.

We have a good return from Gift Aid and ran a successful Stewardship campaign in 2011 – a renewed Stewardship drive may be due. We have five paid part-time members of staff - the Director of Music, the Organist, the Parish Administrator, the Parish Centre Cleaner and the Parish Centre Caretaker. We have committed to Mission Giving

and different charities are supported each year. (*Detailed accounts are available on application to the Parish Administrator, Mrs Frances Major, [frances@majorringer.plus.com](mailto:frances@majorringer.plus.com)*)

Registered Charity Number: 1133346

*Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. Luke 6:38*



Sunday Morning at St Oswald's

# CHRISTCHURCH RHYDYCROESAU

## PARISH PROFILE 2017



### **Mission Statement**

Christchurch aims to grow in the Lord, to live our lives in accordance with our Christian belief and to share our faith by bringing church and community together; working together to help those in need both locally and in the wider world.

### **The Parish**

Rhydycroesau is a small rural village which also includes the hamlets of the Llawnt and Cefn Canol. It lies partly in England in the county of Shropshire and in the borough of Oswestry and partly in Wales in the county of Powys. It is on the most westerly border of the Lichfield diocese.

The population is approximately 280, consisting mainly of farmers and retired people. Most of the land is used for sheep farming and woodland.

### **The Village**

There is a lively community spirit in the village and the Village Hall, which was enlarged and improved in 2007, is the centre for many community groups and activities. These include a weekly market incorporating Post Office services, Ladies Guild, art class, line dancing, tai chi, Welsh learners class, Gardening Club etc. It is the venue for various church and village fund-raising events such as Harvest Suppers, Strawberry Teas, Folk Evenings, Ceilidhs, mid-summer parties, poetry/Shakespeare Evenings and Christmas Wassail.

There is an annual Pantomime, a Spring and Summer Show and an Autumn Fair.

The Hall is also available to hire for private functions – for parties, wedding receptions, meetings etc.

The Pen-y-Dyffryn Hotel (the old Rectory) brings visitors to the area which is popular with walkers and bird watchers and is a good centre for exploring a most beautiful areas of north Wales and the Shropshire/Welsh Borders.

## Interior of Christchurch



### **The Church**

The Church was consecrated in 1838 and reconstructed in 1886; it seats 100 people. The interior is not ornate but beautiful. The tower houses a clock and bells. There is a small, well maintained organ. Tapestry kneelers depicting rural life were made by local people to celebrate the millennium.

The churchyard is sloping and contains trees donated, many years ago, by Lord Harlech's family. There are only a few remaining available plots for graves. Grass cutting is carried out by a small team of volunteers.

Flowers are arranged by members of the congregation and cleaning the church is done on a regular basis also by church members.

Although the congregation is small and mainly elderly it is both welcoming to newcomers and caring of each other. Most of our members take an active part in most of the village activities and groups.

In 2016 the average Sunday attendance was 11 with 26 on the Electoral Roll. The Harvest Festival and the Christmas Carol Service are usually well attended with 36 at Harvest and 74 at the Carol Service in 2016.

A member of the congregation will often play the organ for us but in her absence we have a good supply of organ accompanied hymns on a 'tablet'.

### **Services**

There is a service every Sunday at 9.30 am, with additional services on special days such as Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. The first Sunday of each month is lay-led by members of the congregation, the second, third and fourth Sundays we celebrate Holy Communion (Common Worship) and on a 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday is Morning Prayer (Common Worship).

In the last few years we have been holding a Songs of Praise Service in the evening of the first Sunday of September. Our Harvest Festival is held in October followed by a Harvest Supper and the Carol Service is held on Christmas Eve. *(see appendix)*

### **Outreach activities and events**

Lent Lunches

Coffee Mornings

Annual Strawberry Tea

Harvest Supper

Local Christian Aid collection

Church stall at the annual Village Show and Autumn Fair



Lent Lunch in the Village Hall, March 2017

### **Growth, and links with other churches**

Monthly Prayer Group

Joining with St Oswald's in Oswestry in Lent Groups, Prayer Breakfasts and other prayer and teaching opportunities.

Including members of the Welsh Chapel in Cefn Canol in our special Harvest and Christmas services.

Christchurch is a member of CTOD (Churches Together in Oswestry and District).

Retired members of the clergy and Lay Readers from St Oswald's regularly lead our services.

### **PCC**

There are currently ten members on the PCC with two vacancies. It meets five times a year. We have a Health and Safety representative and Child Protection Officer.

### **Finance**

The parish has paid its parish share on time for many years. It does have some financial reserves but has some maintenance work to be done following a recent Quinquennial inspection.

## Appendix 1

Links to local websites:

<https://www.lichfield.anglican.org/acny/church/354/>

<http://www.oswestry-tc.gov.uk/home.html>

<http://www.visitoswestry.com/tourist-information-centre/>

<http://www.oswestry-welshborders.org.uk/attractions>

<http://www.rhydycroesau.org.uk/rhydycroesauorguk.ipage.com.>

<https://www.lichfield.anglican.org/acny/church/379/>

## Appendix 2

### Usual Patterns of Worship

#### St Oswald's Church

Day	Time	Service	Choir	Average Attendance 2016
<b>Sunday</b>	8.00am	Eucharist ( <i>said</i> )		13
	10.30am	Parish Eucharist (CW) ( <i>Sung</i> )	Choir	138
		1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday All-Age Worship (either Eucharist or Service of the Word)	Junior Choir	
	12.15pm	Baptisms (if appropriate)		variable
	4.00pm	Messy Church (3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday only)		33
	6.30pm	1st Sunday – Choral Eucharist (BCP)	Choral Scholars & Adults	21 plus choir
		2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday Choral Evensong	Choir	
		3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday – Evensong (BCP)		12
<b>Thursday</b>	10.30am	Holy Communion (BCP)		20
<b>Monday – Friday</b>	8.15am	Morning Prayer		
<b>Saturday</b>	5.00pm	Evening Prayer		

## Other Seasonal and Special Services

Major Saints' days – *celebrated with 10.30 Holy Communion*

Advent, Christmas and Epiphany carol services

Christingle

Ash Wednesday (two services with ashing)

Palm Sunday with procession

Daily services in Holy Week

Maundy Thursday with footwashing, Vigil and Compline

Good Friday – All-Age service and Three Hours

Easter Vigil

Ascension Day (two services)

Civic Service

Patronal Festival

Harvest Thanksgiving

Remembrance Sunday

All Souls memorial service



## Christchurch

Time	Sunday of the Month	Service	Average Attendance 2016
9.30am	1 <sup>st</sup>	Lay-led Family Service	16
9.30am	2 <sup>nd</sup> 3 <sup>rd</sup> 4 <sup>th</sup>	Holy Communion(CW) Led by Rector or one of the retired clergy	10
9.30am	5 <sup>th</sup>	Morning Prayer (CW) Led by a lay-reader from St Oswald's	11

### Additional Services

Christmas Eve Carol Service

Ash Wednesday (with ashing)

Mothering Sunday

Good Friday

Songs of Praise

Harvest Thanksgiving

## Appendix 3

### Facts & Figures

#### St Oswald's Church

Average numbers per year (based on figures for 2010 to 2016)

<b>Weddings</b>	<b>Funerals</b>	<b>Baptisms</b>	<b>Electoral Roll</b>
10	56	43	286
<b>Sunday Attendance</b>	<b>Messy Church</b>		
<b>Adults Children</b>	<b>Adults Children</b>	<b>Christmas Total</b>	<b>Easter Total</b>
150 14	14 13	581	299

#### 2016

<b>Weddings</b>	<b>Funerals</b>	<b>Baptisms</b>	<b>Electoral Roll</b>
7	65	49	290
<b>Average Sunday Attendance</b>	<b>Average Messy Church Attendance</b>		
<b>Adults Children</b>	<b>Adults Children</b>	<b>Christmas Total</b>	<b>Easter Total</b>
159 15	16 17	701	300

The number on the Electoral Roll at Easter 2017 is 302 (of whom 46 live outside the Parish). Average Sunday attendance is about 168.

#### Christchurch

##### Total number in last 7 years (2010- 2016)

Weddings	4
Funerals	6
Baptisms	11

##### For 2016

Weddings	0
Funerals	0
Baptisms	3
Christmas Total	66
Easter Total	16
Average Sunday Attendance	13

# Appendix 4

## St Oswald's Committee Structure

