



The Church of England in Droitwich Spa

A Profile of the Parish for the post of Rector Designate

Diocese of Worcester

PCC Approved 1.0

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<http://www.droitwichparish.org.uk/>

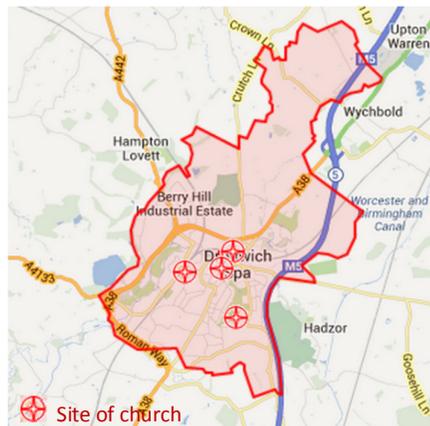


Droitwich Spa – the Town, History and Make-up

Droitwich Spa is a growing Worcestershire town (Population Circa.25,000) situated approximately 23 miles southwest of Birmingham and 5 miles north of Worcester. Its origins date from pre-Roman times and it continued to thrive through the centuries as an important settlement due to its location over vast deposits of brine. Salt working provided its main source of income until the turn of the twentieth century when the focus on production moved to nearby Stoke Prior.

It is easily accessible from the M5 from both the north and south of the town and is also served by a well-used Railway Station and the Droitwich Canal linking the River Severn with the Worcester & Birmingham Canal. A small river (River Salwarpe) also flows through the town.

In the 1960's, as light industry expanded, the town expanded to the west where a large social housing development was built to provide an overspill estate for Birmingham. From that time on other significant residential development started and this continues today, mainly to the south of the town, and into the neighbouring parish of Salwarpe with Martin Hussingtree.



Whilst many of the current residents are long established, the expansion of the town over the last 50 years, and with good communications, Droitwich has developed into a commuter base for the West Midlands and Worcester areas – and beyond. Around the town are a number of industrial estates providing employment – particularly light manufacturing, distribution and other service industries.

The town centre itself has seen some investment including the building of a new Health Centre, regeneration of the Old High Street, with its mix of medieval and Georgian buildings, and the building of a new Waitrose store. The re-opening of the Droitwich Canal in 2011 is also bringing more business and visitors to the town.

Schooling is provided by three first schools, including St Peter's Church of England Voluntary Aided First School adjacent to St Peter's Church, and two middle schools, a Roman Catholic primary school and a large High School which serve the surrounding rural communities as well as Droitwich itself. A private school also provides a mixed prep and a girls' senior department. There are also several pre-schools and nurseries in the town.

Whilst the population is generally mixed in age, Droitwich does have a large number of Residential and Nursing Homes and some retirement accommodation, with a McCarthy & Stone development underway. It also has its share of social issues and Churches Together in Droitwich is currently setting up a food-bank to meet identified need.

Droitwich offers a very pleasant environment in which to live. It is blessed with many amenities including a Salt Water Lido Pool, Theatre, Library, Leisure Centre, two Bowling Greens, Cricket, Rugby, Football and Tennis clubs and a variety of other social and recreational facilities in the town centre itself or nearby.



The Church of England in Droitwich Spa

The Parish Churches

The Christian church in Droitwich goes back at least to Saxon times, and there was a stone Saxon church on at least one of the current church sites. Three of the current four buildings are Norman in origin, and it was here that Richard de Wych, later Bishop of Chichester, was born. St Richard is commemorated in a number of ways in the area, notably in a series of fine mosaics in the town's Roman Catholic Church of St Catherine of Alexandria and the Sacred Heart and the chapel at St Andrew's Church. In the early 1970s the three separate Anglican parishes of St Andrew, St Nicholas and St Peter de Witton were brought together to form the Droitwich Team Ministry. This became The Parish of Droitwich Spa in 1987 when St Augustine's, Dodderhill, joined the team. The present parish covers most of the township of Droitwich, except for some roads on new housing developments in the south which belong to the neighbouring parish of Salwarpe, and extends into the country in the north. There are four church buildings each with full parish church status.



St Andrew's Church occupies a prime town-centre site on the corner of the High Street. It has an ancient foundation, but the present building dates from the 13th century onwards. It is Grade 1 listed and has a seating capacity of about 200. Attached to the church is the Parish Centre. This provides meeting and social facilities for both the church and other users; it also houses the Parish Office where a part time secretary for the parish is

employed and it also provides office accommodation for the Rural Dean and a neighbouring parish. The church is open during each weekday and refreshments are available in the Parish Centre Coffee Shop (staffed by volunteers) each morning from Thursday to Saturday. Adjacent to this is the parish garden which in recent months has undergone some development to make it a communal place and further plans to develop this are underway.

St Augustine's Church, just north of the town centre, has Saxon foundations and is Grade 2* listed. At its hilltop location, and with its regular peal of eight bells, it is one of the town's most prominent landmarks. The mainly 13th century chancel, crossing and north transept are the only parts of a large church to have survived damage in the Civil War. The south transept was rebuilt in the 18th century with a substantial tower above it, leaving a seating capacity of about 200. In 1999 an extension was added to provide kitchen and toilet facilities, reception area and first floor meeting room. The church is used for quiet days, and the tower with its views over the town and countryside is open in conjunction with town festivals.





St Nicholas' Church was built in 1869 on the site of an older church which itself had been relocated from a medieval foundation nearer Droitwich town centre. Half a mile west of the centre, set in a mixed residential and commercial area, next to a through road and close to the railway station, its location is one of the busier ones in Droitwich. In the 1980s the pews were removed from the interior and a side aisle was converted to provide a

kitchen and toilets. Consequently this church provides a very flexible space for worship, meetings, social events and activities for children. It seats approximately 150 and is open at limited times during the week.

St Peter de Witton stands a mile south-east of the town centre in an almost entirely residential area first developed significantly in the 1930s and still expanding today. It is a Norman cruciform building seating about 200, Grade 2* listed, with a ring of six bells, and set in a conservation area known as St Peter's Fields, devoted to recreational use for the town. In the 1970s a small hall with kitchen and toilets was added and this is now used during the week by an independent Pre-school. St



Peter's Church of England Voluntary Aided First School is nearby. The church is open to visitors every day and it is the most popular choice of venue for weddings in the parish.

Churchyards

Each of the churches has a churchyard which is open for burials (though St Nicholas's churchyard is imminently due for closure). In the case of St Andrew's the churchyard is detached and located just south of the town centre where St Mary's chapel of ease (demolished 2012) used to stand.

All the parish churches have undergone quinquennial inspections recently. All require work to the fabric and the relevant Church Councils are considering how these works might be addressed.



Ministry & Mission

Worship

There is regular Sunday worship in three of the churches with some diversity in the styles and forms of worship. The current pattern of worship has been in place since 2008 and includes both eucharistic and non-eucharistic services, mainly using forms of liturgy from *Common Worship*. More traditional services of Holy Communion are held quarterly on Sundays and fortnightly midweek. A variety of musical styles support worship with organs, pianos, instrumental groups and formal and informal choirs. United parish services are held three or four times a year and these usually replace all the services in the parish for that day. These are in addition occasions such as Advent and Christmas Carol Services and midweek festivals and days of obligation. St Andrew's is also the venue for town gatherings such as the Civic Service and Remembrance Day Service.

The parish has authorisation from the Diocese to admit children to Communion. The sacrament is reserved and full vestments are regularly worn.

During the week there are Eucharistic services in three of the churches as well as a number of prayer and study groups meeting in people's homes.

Current Patterns of Worship (average attendance in 2012 shown in brackets)	
<u>Sundays</u>	
8.00 St Augustine's Holy Eucharist (27 adults)	
9.30 St Peter's Morning Worship for all ages held on two Sundays each month, Holy Eucharist with children's "Sunday Club" on the other Sundays (66 adults and 11 children)	
10.30 St Andrew's Holy Eucharist (52 adults)	
17.00 St Nicholas's Occasional services are held at St Nicholas's, for example Harvest Praise, All Souls and Christmas Eve.	
<u>Weekday Eucharists</u>	
Tuesdays	9.30am St Nicholas (9 adults)
Wednesday	11am St Andrew's (20 adults)
Thursday	9.30am St Augustine's (14 adults)

A new electoral roll was compiled in 2013 and 160 people have applied to be on the roll. In 2012 there were 186 Easter communicants (total attendance 281) and 185 Christmas communicants (total attendance 687 - including all Christmastide services)



Our Ministry Now

The current team ministry is made up of 1 ²/₃ full-time clergy (1 ¹/₃ Priest is allocated to neighbouring Salwarpe & Hindlip with Martin Hussingtree) of incumbent status and one part-time self-supporting Associate Priest. There is one retired priest living in the parish who is willing to help take services. The Rural Dean also lives in the parish and our new Archdeacon has just moved here.

The style of ministry is collaborative, supports the ministry of both men and women, and the concept of 'team' is taken seriously. Leadership and oversight are shared in a variety of ways according to need and circumstance. The clergy work particularly closely with lay ministers and Churchwardens.

A significant number of lay people are involved in liturgical, pastoral and teaching roles within the congregation. There are 7 Authorised Lay Ministers, and 32 Eucharistic Ministers who, between them, assist at services and take the reserved sacrament to people in their own homes, nursing and residential homes. A team is also involved in Baptism preparation. Baptism Enquirers meetings are held monthly and during the course of 2012 68 baptisms were held. Clergy officiated at 22 weddings and 128 funerals, 59 in church and 69 at crematoria.

There are a number of Bible study and prayer groups which are organised on both a parish and congregational basis, as well as an involvement in Churches Together prayer groups and events. The parish admits children to communion and this preparation is arranged centrally. Confirmation and marriage preparation are similarly managed. Occasional quiet days are also held.

Other parish groups include a reading group, bell ringers, parish fellowship, wives group and a young people's group. Toddlers groups meet each week at St Nicholas's Church which is also used by an independent Sunday School, Lighthouse, each Sunday.

Good links exist with local schools and with a number of young people's uniformed organisations. There are established patterns of school visits to the parish churches and one of the incumbents is *ex officio* governor of St Peter's Church of England Voluntary Aided First School. Ministers and lay people from Churches Together share in a rota for taking assemblies in schools. Brownie and Guide groups are invited on a regular basis to take part in church occasions such as Christingle and Harvest Festival services.

The parish is working on developing a welcoming and inclusive presence in the town and developing our mission and ministry through the more effective use of our buildings and our participation in town events. During town festivals a café is run in the Parish Centre and in recent years St Andrew's Church has been the venue for craft fairs, art exhibitions, concerts and community services.



Churches Together in Droitwich Spa

Churches Together in Droitwich Spa comprises all the major denominations in the town - Anglican, Assemblies of God, Baptist, Methodist, Roman Catholic and Salvation Army - and there are cordial relations between the member churches and between the ministers as



individuals. Churches Together co-ordinates a number of regular shared occasions, such as Lent meetings and a Good Friday Walk of Witness, as well as other specific events. Currently it is exploring with the support of the Trussell Trust the setting up of a Food-bank in the town, an initiative which the PCC has resolved to support. Following the Covenant agreement the Anglican and Methodist churches have for some years welcomed an observer to each other's church council meetings.

Where we have come from

Until 2010 the team consisted of 3 stipendiary clergy, each having a clearly defined role: Congregational Pastor, Community Missioner and a Pastoral Missioner. These roles were based on parish-wide responsibilities rather than geographical areas or church buildings, and were supported by focused teams of lay members. The emphasis of this model was on looking outward rather than inward, making clearer links with the community and working more effectively with individuals who approached the church for ministry. Over the years, the team of clergy has been reduced to 1 $\frac{2}{3}$ ($\frac{1}{3}$ Priest assigned to S&MH) and, with the addition of the churches of Salwarpe and Martin Hussingtree to the team, these roles became less defined, yet the overall vision remains. Links with community have continued to strengthen, particularly through the provision of the Café@Centre, which is especially successful during town festivals, and the opening (and on-going development) of the parish centre and garden for visitors and organised events. The sharing of our administrative facilities and resources with the deanery has enabled us to work more collaboratively with our deanery colleagues.

Where we are going

The reduction of clergy has been a challenge but nevertheless is providing the opportunity for increased lay responsibility, a current priority. While we celebrate the diversity in our approach to worship in our churches, we are mindful that we are one parish, and this is an aspect that we would look to strengthen beyond that of sharing united services. As more people respond prayerfully to God's calling to serve him in new and exciting ways, there is a general air of expectation that God is challenging and moulding us.

This past year the PCC has spent time reviewing and updating the Droitwich Parish Vision (see below) which is aligned to the Diocesan "Kingdom People" vision. We fully embrace Bishop John's vision of the church as "God's gift to the world" and are prayerfully reflecting on the eight characteristics outlined in the "Kingdom People" framework. We wish to appoint a Rector who can share this vision; to lead and enable us, through the power of the Spirit, to discern God's will for His mission here and encourage us to use our God-given gifts to establish the values of love, compassion, justice and freedom in the community.



Strapline	The Vision Statement text
	<i>The Church of England in Droitwich Spa, following in the steps of St Richard de Wych, seeks to:</i>
Worshipping God	<i>love Christ more dearly</i> especially through providing engaging worship, and support for personal prayer, and drawing others to Him through the sharing of our faith and worship.
Growing Christians	<i>know Christ more clearly</i> especially in growth in learning, reflection and study, supporting each other in pastoral care, and learning to see the image of God in friend and stranger.
Serving Community	<i>and follow Christ more nearly</i> in seeking God’s kingdom by promoting justice and reconciliation in society, and being a welcoming and inclusive witness to the love of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Managing the Parish

As a single parish the legal body is the Parochial Church Council which comprises clergy, churchwardens, Deanery Synod representatives and members elected from each of the local congregations of St Andrew's, St Augustine's and St Peter's. It also includes Readers when there are people in that role in the parish. The PCC meets every other month. Clergy, the churchwardens, the lay vice chair of the PCC and the treasurer make up the Standing Committee which meets monthly. Although the structure provides for eight churchwardens, two for each of the four parish churches, currently only three are elected, which has been the position for some time. Day to day running of St Andrew's, St Augustine's and St Peter's is delegated to District Church Councils comprising PCC members associated with the church concerned and other representatives elected from the congregations. Finances are managed centrally with delegated authority for routine and smaller items. Currently St Nicholas' does not have a DCC; relevant matters are discussed at occasional congregational meetings and managed by the Standing Committee and PCC.

Christian Giving is encouraged and promoted centrally with an annual presentation in Sunday services. For some years the parish has not paid its full parish share, a situation which gives rise to continuing concern. Following recent quinquennial inspections the parish is in the process of compiling an asset management plan for all the parish buildings and land.



The Current Team Clergy

David Owen

The Rev'd David Owen came to the parish in January 2007 to fill the position of the third member of the team then in place. His role was as Team Vicar and Pastoral Missioner. His initial role in the Team was in encouraging those who are often seen as "not yet" part of the church community. His ministry encompasses the co-ordination of the occasional offices across the parish.

In November 2010 he was licensed as Priest-in-Charge to the adjoining parish of Salwarpe & Hindlip with Martin Hussingtree in addition to his ministry in Droitwich.

David will be moving on in the Spring to take up the post of Rector in the Chet Valley Benefice in the Diocese of Norwich.

Rita Holden

The Rev'd Rita Holden came to Droitwich as a deacon in October 2002 and was ordained priest in January 2003. She completed her curacy in October 2005 and is now licensed as an NS Associate Priest in the Team.

Her particular gifting and interest is in pastoral care.

