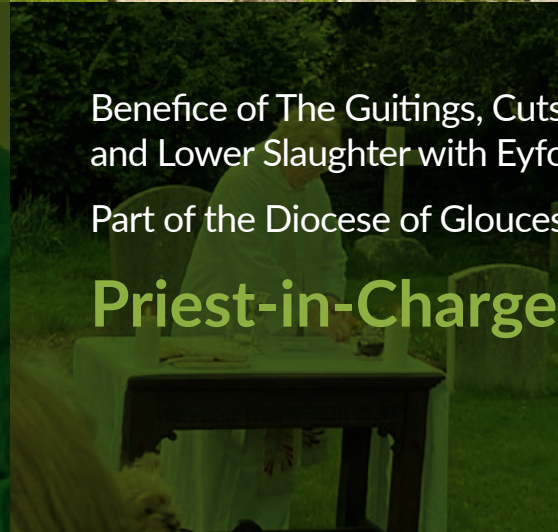




*“Churches and School working together to share God’s love in our communities”*



Benefice of The Guitings, Cutsdean, Farmcote, Upper Slaughter and Lower Slaughter with Eyford and Naunton  
Part of the Diocese of Gloucester, North Cotswold Deanery

## Priest-in-Charge Profile – 2025



# Contents

Section 2. Welcome & Introduction	4
Section 3. Our Vision & Priorities	6
Section 4. Worship & Spiritual Life	7
Section 5. Ministry Team & Support	8
Section 6. Community & Outreach	9
Section 7. Practical Information	10
Section 8. Schools & Young People	11
Section 9. Challenges & Opportunities	12
Section 10. What We Offer	13
Section 11. Who We Are	14
General Description of the Benefice Community	21
Section 12. The Role	22
Section 13. Contact Information	23
Section 14. Further Information	23
Full Parish Profiles	24

## Section 2. Welcome & Introduction

### Seven churches serving the heart of the Cotswolds

**W**elcome to our Benefice. Nestled among the rolling hills and honey-coloured stone villages of the North Cotswolds, we are a rural group of five parishes with seven churches—Temple Guiting with Cutsdean, Guiting Power with Farmcote, Naunton, Upper Slaughter with Eyford, Lower Slaughter—united in faith, friendship, and service. Each parish has its own quirks, customs and individual history, but we share a deep sense of cohesion and mutual support (not to mention an impressive capacity for cake and coffee after church).

4

We are seeking a Priest-in-Charge who will walk alongside us—welcoming, listening, encouraging, and helping us to grow in faith and confidence as we respond to the needs and opportunities within our communities; someone who will also challenge us where needed, help deepen our understanding, and support our ongoing development as a worshipping and serving church. We would love a leader who's not afraid of the occasional muddle, values people over process, and knows that tea and trust go a long way.

This Benefice offers:

- Historic churches with rich musical and architectural heritage
- Strong and diverse communities with vibrant village life
- A supportive ministry team and engaged laity
- A well-established and much-loved Church of England Primary School
- A home and a place for you to flourish

We value tradition but are not bound by it. Our congregations include lifelong Anglicans, returning worshippers, those from other denominations, the vaguely curious, the frankly sceptical, and new enquirers—ranging from older villagers to young families. We aim to be open, welcoming, and ready to grow together in hope, imagination, and with the kind of practical dedication that sees both worship and community events flourish.

We support the North Cotswold Deanery Strategic Plan and its vision for flourishing, sustainable rural ministry. We share the Deanery's emphasis on collaboration, shared leadership, and mutual encouragement, and see value in deepening our ties with neighbouring benefices. While we are committed to deepening collaboration—particularly with benefices such as Stow-on-the-Wold and Bourton-on-the-Water—we are equally committed to preserving the unique identity and autonomy of each of our parishes. We believe that shared ministry can enhance what we each offer, without diminishing our local distinctiveness.

### Inclusivity

As a Benefice, we are committed to the principles of Inclusive Church, a church that serves all people, celebrates and affirms every individual, and rejects all forms of discrimination. We seek to be a place of genuine welcome and belonging for all, regardless of disability, economic power, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, learning disability, mental health, neurodiversity or sexuality. We are also proud to be part of the Welcome Directory across all our parishes, affirming our support for those leaving prison and seeking to rebuild their lives within a safe and accepting community.



### Vacancy Prayer

*Heavenly Father.*

*We thank you for the blessings of our Benefice life together, and pray that we may continue to be a blessing to one another during this time of vacancy.*

*We pray for the person you are calling to serve among us.*

*Grant them vision, courage and love.*

*Grant us open hearts to welcome and work alongside them.*

*That together we may serve your kingdom faithfully, In this place and in this time.*

*Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*



5

## Section 3. Our Vision & Priorities

### Churches and School working together to share God's love in our communities

**W**e are a Benefice rooted in our shared commitment to being a local Christian presence, serving our communities, and encouraging all to explore and grow in their faith and relationship with God. Our churches are places of welcome, worship, and hospitality—offering sacred spaces that are open to all, both spiritually and practically.

We embrace collaboration across our parishes and with the wider Deanery, recognising the strength that comes from shared purpose and mutual encouragement. Our connection with Temple Guiting Church of England Primary School is a vital and life-giving part of our ministry, bringing joy, energy, and regular opportunities to share faith with children and families at the heart of our Benefice.

We are committed to a rhythm of worship that blends tradition with creativity, reflecting the character of each parish while providing shared opportunities for celebration and reflection. Discipleship and lay leadership are important to us. We seek to create space for faith exploration—both within and beyond our churches—and to support and mentor those called to serve in new ways. Our buildings are not only places of worship, but also centres for community life, reflection, and outreach.

We are looking for a priest who will:

- Deepen our life of prayer and service
- Strengthen the vital link between church and school
- Encourage us to explore new forms of mission and engagement
- Help us build on what is strong and respond with wisdom and creativity to what is emerging
- Broaden our connections with neighbouring Benefices as part of the North Cotswold Deanery's vision for flourishing, sustainable ministry

Together, we hope to continue growing as a faithful and outward-looking Benefice—open to change, grounded in prayer, and deeply committed to serving the people and places entrusted to our care.



## Section 4. Worship & Spiritual Life

### Regular Worship Patterns

**E**ach parish offers at least one service per month, with shared Benefice services on fifth Sundays and for major festivals. At least one service of Holy Communion is held within the Benefice each Sunday

- Holy Communion (Common Worship and BCP)
- Morning and Evening Prayer
- Taizé worship (Temple Guiting)
- Wild Worship (Temple Guiting)
- Pub services (Naunton)
- Tuesday lay-led prayer (Guiting Power)
- Zoom Morning Prayer monthly
- Zoom Bible Study

### Festival Services

Harvest, Patronal festivals, Remembrance, Christmas Carols and Crib Services, Easter Dawn, Ascension Day, Rogation walks, Plough Sunday, Praise, Prosecco and Puddings, Advent and Christmas across the Benefice..

### Lay Participation

It takes a village—and in our case, several—to support the life of our churches. Bible readers, intercessors, flower

arrangers, church cleaners, bell ringers, cake bakers and choir members all contribute to our worship. Some congregations now use digital hymn apps, and in Guiting Power, a lay-led Bible study group keeps the discussion lively. Behind the scenes, welcomers, rota organisers, newsletter writers, and all manner of quiet coordinators ensure things run smoothly and providing the essential support that allows our priest to focus on leading, teaching, and caring.

We are additionally blessed to be supported by Sue, a dedicated part time SSM Associate Priest

### Occasional Offices (2024)

Parish	Baptisms	Weddings	Funerals (Church)	Funerals (Other)	Burials of Ashes
Guiting Power	1	1	4	1 (crematorium)	1
Lower Slaughter	9	6	1	-	-
Upper Slaughter	4	3	1	-	1
Naunton	4	-	3	1 (crematorium)	-
Farmcote	-	-	-	-	2 (burials)
Temple Guiting	1	1	6	2 (crematorium)	1
Cutsdean	-	-	-	-	1



## Section 5. Ministry Team & Support

We are blessed with:

- Committed Churchwardens' Team across the Benefice
- Active PCCs with lay responsibility shared
- Lay worship leaders and regular intercessors
- A part-time Benefice Administrator
- Deanery Synod representatives and diocesan links
- SSM associate priest
- An army of willing volunteers

There is an increasingly strong culture of collaboration, with regular Benefice-wide PCC and warden meetings. The ministry team is supportive and ready to work in partnership with our new priest.



## Section 6. Community & Outreach

Our churches are at the heart of village life, offering a warm welcome through regular events and seasonal celebrations:

- **Temple Guiting:** Hosts much-loved community events such as the Daffodil Walk and Safari Lunch, alongside informal pop-up bars and regular coffee mornings which help bring neighbours together.
- **Naunton:** Offers a vibrant calendar including the Coffee Shop, film nights, Burns Suppers, Lent Lunches and music concerts, drawing in many from across the village and beyond.
- **Guiting Power:** Inclusive and welcoming, keeping the church involved in village life through events such as Open Gardens, Soup & Sale, and contributing regularly to the village newsletter.
- **Lower Slaughter:** Known for its cheerful and welcoming community spirit. Church and Village Hall are central to village life and together host community events such as Harvest lunch and well-attended Christmas party. Church regularly contributes to village newsletter and is heavily involved in the annual village fete.

- **Upper Slaughter:** Celebrates the seasons with its annual fête, Harvest and Christmas events. A regular warm space is held at the Lords of the Manor Hotel, offering a friendly place to gather over coffee and biscuits.
- **Cutsdean:** With no other public building, the church is the social heart of the village, hosting talks, concerts and gatherings—most recently a summer *Celebration of Words and Music* followed by a BBQ. The church is also exploring small group opportunities for informal faith discussions, and raising funds to carry out recommended repairs.

As a Benefice, we are part of and support the principles of Inclusive Church. We are also proud to have adopted the *Welcome Directory* across all our parishes, affirming our commitment to being welcoming and safe spaces for all, including those leaving prison and seeking to rebuild their lives within a supportive community.

We support a number of local and national charities, including the Cotswold Foodbank, Kate's Home Nursing and Operation Christmas Child. We also take part in the *Angel Tree* project, which enables UK prisoners to send Christmas gifts to their children—a small but meaningful way to ease hardship and maintain family connections during a difficult time.

Each church has a named Safeguarding Officer, and we are committed to safe, caring environments for all. Pastoral resources are available on issues such as domestic abuse and mental health.

We communicate via a weekly e-newsletter and our bi-monthly *Seventy Times Seven* magazine.

We aspire to:

- Strengthen links with the Cotswold School and engage young people
- Welcome second-home owners, visitors, and newer residents
- Expand seasonal and informal worship, and faith exploration groups
- Provide quiet spaces and gentle witness in our churches
- Stay open to creative and unexpected opportunities
- Live out our faith with openness and compassion, recognising that each person in our communities is a unique individual, created and valued by God.

These aspirations reflect the Deanery's vision for sustainable ministry, rooted communities, and church buildings as spaces of welcome and service.



## Section 7. Practical Information

- The Benefice serves a population of approximately 1,300 across its seven parishes.
- Financial health varies between parishes, but there is a strong sense of collective responsibility. The Parish Share is met each year through open discussion and agreement on contributions.
- There's a long-standing tradition of FUNdraising—events that bring people together, share a bit of joy, and hopefully raise some money in the process!
- Residents benefit from easy access to amenities in nearby Bourton-on-the-Water, Stow-on-the-Wold, and Moreton-in-Marsh, including GPs, shops, markets, and schools. Rail connections to London and Worcester are excellent via Kingham and Moreton stations.
- Within the Benefice, Temple Guiting has a well-regarded Primary School; Secondary education is available at The Cotswold School in Bourton-on-the-Water.
- Communication is well supported through the bi-monthly Seventy Times Seven magazine, regular parish emails, and local newsletters, helping to keep church and community life closely connected.



## Section 8. Schools & Young People

Click to hear the Children sing

### Temple Guiting Church of England Primary School

Temple Guiting Church of England Primary School lies at the heart of our Benefice life. Set in a beautiful rural location, the school blends Victorian architecture with recently built, environmentally conscious classrooms. Its motto, “Everyone to thrive,” rooted in John 10:10, guides

*“I hope that our new vicar does lots of fun things with us”*  
(Year 4)

Worship is creative and varied, including class-led and celebration assemblies. Prayers written by the children are a regular feature, demonstrating deep engagement with faith, spirituality and reflection.

The connection with St Mary’s Church, Temple Guiting, is strong and joyful. The school community celebrates major festivals in church, including Christmas, Easter, Ascension, and Christingle. These events are well attended by families

and foster a shared sense of worship across generations. Parents and carers are warmly welcomed and often express appreciation for the school’s strong Christian identity.

A much-loved part of school life is the weekly ‘Spread the Word’ assembly, when a team of adults from our churches act out Bible stories. These assemblies are interactive and lively, combining storytelling, discussion, and music to engage children with scripture and its meaning for their lives today.

The Governing Board is active and involved, with a constitution that includes three Foundation Governors (the ex-officio incumbent and two church-appointed members). The school has recently been rated ‘Good’ by Ofsted, with ‘Outstanding’ for pupils’ personal

*“I would like someone who really knows each and every one of us, even by name”*  
(Year 6)

development and behaviour.

Looking to the future, the school community hopes for a priest who will be prayerful and present – someone who enjoys spending time with children, supporting the teaching of RE, and helping to shape and mentor the school’s Worship Leaders. There is also a desire for the new priest to continue providing pastoral care for staff and to strengthen relationships with parents.

Many pupils from Temple Guiting move on to the Cotswold School in Bourton-on-the-Water, which is rated ‘Outstanding’ by Ofsted. The Deanery is actively exploring ways to strengthen links with the school, including potential funding initiatives, and we hope to build a closer relationship in the years to come.

*“I would like a new vicar who is full of love”*  
(Year 1)

*“I would like a vicar who keeps the church as OUR CHURCH”*  
(Year 5)

## Section 9. Challenges & Opportunities

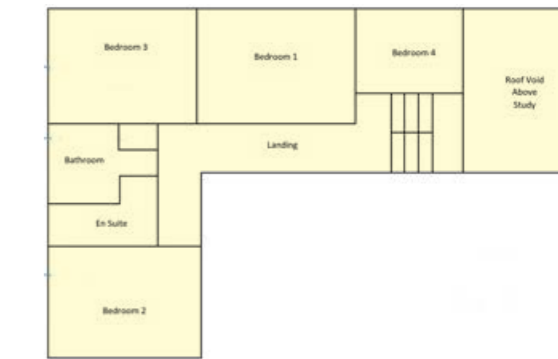
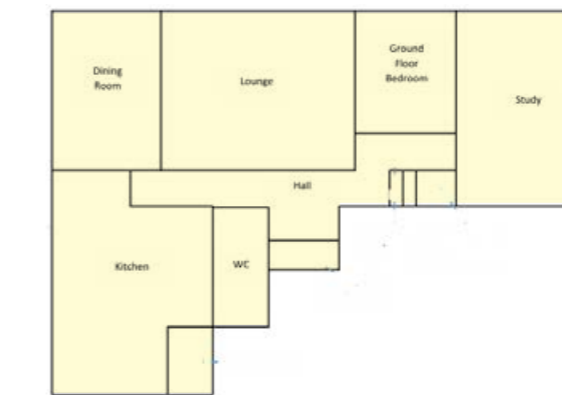
Like most rural benefices, we have our fair share of challenges—some ancient, some emerging, and a few that seem to resurface with each PCC meeting. We don't have all the answers, but we do have energy, honesty, and a good sense of humour. While there may be bumps along the way (seven churches and one vicar is quite the juggling act), we also see real opportunities for growth, creativity, and faithful service.

### Challenges

- Many of our churches have ageing congregations, and we recognise the importance—and difficulty—of attracting and engaging younger people.
- With seven churches in the Benefice, balancing different traditions, needs, and expectations can be complex and time-consuming.
- Financial reserves are limited in some parishes, requiring careful stewardship and regular fundraising to meet ongoing costs.

### Opportunities

- There is real potential in connecting with second-home owners and newer residents, helping them feel part of the worshipping and wider community.
- Our church buildings are well loved and well used, but there is scope to use them more creatively for mission, hospitality, and outreach.
- We are keen to strengthen links with local schools—particularly Temple Guiting Primary—and to develop youth engagement across the Benefice.
- As our congregations evolve, there are opportunities to explore new forms of worship and to encourage lay leadership in fresh and meaningful ways.



## Section 10. What We Offer

We believe this Benefice offers a fulfilling and rewarding context for ministry. Rooted in prayer and community, with a strong sense of place and history, it is a setting where you can lead with confidence, grow in faith, and flourish both personally and professionally.

We offer you:

- A Benefice where you can lead, grow and flourish
- Seven historic and beautiful churches
- Warm, prayerful and generous people
- A home in the Rectory at Lower Slaughter, with large garden, views of the church, and on-site Benefice Office
- Supportive PCCs and wardens
- Administrative and deanery support
- Active villages with events, amenities and welcome

The Benefice is under the joint patronage of the Bishop of Gloucester, the Guiting Manor Amenity Trust, Mr Francis Witts, and Christ Church Oxford.

Christ Church takes an active and continuing interest in the Benefices in which it holds patronage. This includes support beyond the appointment process, such as access to certain grants, a biennial conference for incumbents held at Christ Church, and an invitation to parishioners every two years for a service and dinner in Oxford.

**The Rectory** is a well-equipped house, located on the northern outskirts of Lower Slaughter with fine views across the cricket field to St. Mary's church beyond. Living accommodation downstairs comprises kitchen, cloakroom, dining room, sitting room and snug, whilst upstairs there are 3 double bedrooms (one with en-suite shower room, one with washbasin and one with built-in wardrobes), a single bedroom, family bathroom and storeroom. Attached to the main house is the Benefice office/study.

An oil-fired boiler takes care of the heating and hot water. Outside is a double garage, ample parking and a large, secure and very private garden, surrounded by farmland.

Despite its tranquil position, The Rectory is close to all the everyday amenities provided at Bourton on the Water and Stow on the Wold and there are excellent schools nearby.

## Section 11. Who We Are

### Guiting Power

**G**uiting Power is a friendly, community-minded village with strong local participation and a long-standing relationship with the Guiting Manor Amenity Trust, one of the Benefice Patrons. St Michael & All Angels lies at the southern edge of the village and is open daily for quiet reflection and regular visitors.

It hosts events such as the Easter Fair, Open Gardens, Soup & Sale, and the Christmas Fair, with many activities taking place in the church itself. Worship includes two services a month and Tuesday morning lay-led prayer, and festivals are particularly well attended. The active PCC is supported by volunteers, though the ageing congregation and future roof repairs remain challenges.

[<click to read more>](#)



### Farmcote

**T**he small hamlet of Farmcote is home to a chapel of ease overseen by the Guiting Power with Farmcote PCC, supported by a dedicated chapel warden. Though quiet, it remains a valued part of the parish's spiritual heritage and offers opportunities for occasional worship in a peaceful rural setting.

[<click to read more>](#)

## Temple Guiting

Temple Guiting is a small but active village with a strong sense of community and a good mix of ages, supported by a well-used village hall, cricket pitch, and a much-valued Church of England Primary School. The village has deep historical roots, including links to the Knights Templar, and is home to the Grade I listed church of St Mary's, which dates back to the 12th century. Worship includes traditional services, Taizé evenings, and outdoor Wild Worship. The re-ordered West End, where pews have been removed, provides a flexible space used for coffee mornings, concerts, and talks.

The church has a close and joyful relationship with the school. Children regularly worship at St Mary's and take part in services for major festivals such as Christmas, Easter and Christingle. They enjoy being in the church, and their presence brings real life and energy to the space. St Mary's remains a focal point for village life throughout the year, particularly during events such as the Daffodil Walk and Safari Lunch. [<click to read more>](#)



## Cutsdean

Cutsdean is a small rural community with a welcoming heart, located in the high Cotswolds near the source of the River Windrush. The village lies within the Stanway Estate, which owns and manages a significant number of properties. The church of St James', set in the farmyard, is the only public building and serves as the social and spiritual centre of the village. It is closely linked with St Mary's, Temple Guiting, and shares the same PCC. Monthly services are well supported, often drawing worshippers from across the Benefice. The church hosts community events, most recently the Celebration of Words and Music.

Cutsdean is home to a much-loved community orchard—cleared and restored by residents—which remains a symbol of the village's collaborative spirit. Despite its size, the community shows remarkable dedication and is currently raising funds for essential church repairs.

[<click to read more>](#)

## Upper Slaughter with Eyford

Upper Slaughter is a picturesque and historically significant village, noted as a “Doubly Thankful Village.” St Peter’s Church, set overlooking a ford on the River Eye, welcomes over 4,000 visitors annually and holds regular services, seasonal celebrations, and a popular annual fête.

18

A fortnightly warm space at the nearby Lords of the Manor Hotel offers connection and hospitality. The village hall plays an important role in community life, bringing people together for regular gatherings, especially after major church services such as Christmas and Harvest, and is also home to the much-enjoyed “Abbatoir” Jazz Club. The congregation is small but faithful, and the PCC works well together, supported by one of the Benefice patrons, Francis Witts, who resides in the parish. [<click to read more>](#)



## Lower Slaughter

Lower Slaughter is a well-known and much-visited Cotswold village where St Mary’s Church stands at the centre of the community. The church works closely with the Village Hall where a wide range of events are hosted including village celebrations, fundraising days, art classes and exhibitions.

A small and cohesive PCC and committed volunteers help maintaining the church and its outreach. It plays a full role in benefice worship and welcomes thousands of visitors from home and overseas each year. [<click to read more>](#)

19



## Naunton

Naunton is a lively, cohesive village where St Andrew's Church plays a central role in both worship and village life. Services range from traditional to innovative, including the informal 'Spirit of Naunton' service held in the village pub.

The church is open daily and hosts a Thursday Coffee Shop, monthly cinema night, and cultural events including concerts and talks. The PCC is active, and lay leadership is growing. Naunton also supports charitable giving and maintains close involvement with the wider Benefice through joint services and shared ministry.

[<click to read more>](#)

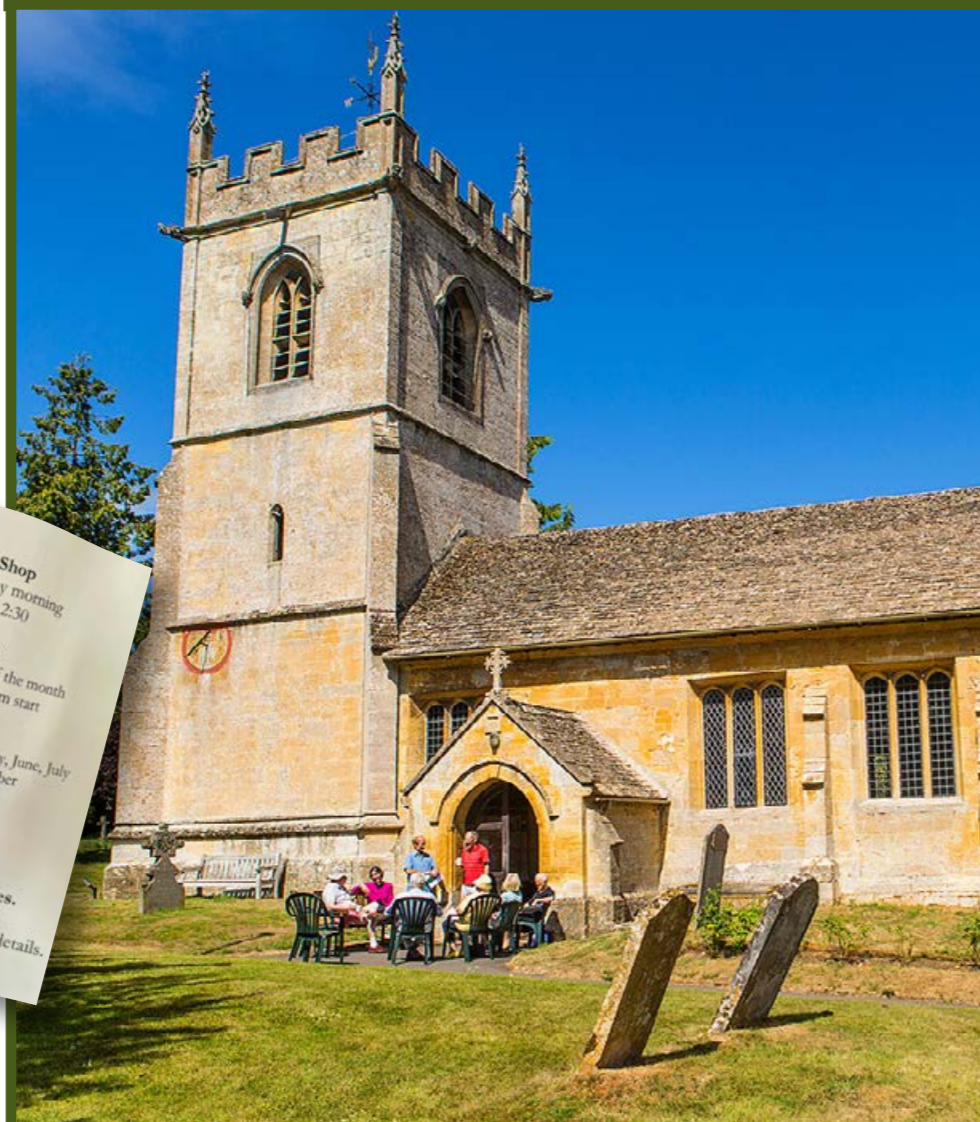


Coffee Shop  
every Thursday morning  
10:30 - 12:30

Cinema  
every first Tuesday of the month  
7:15 pm for 7:45 pm start

Concerts  
one Friday evening every May, June, July  
and September/October

By the way,  
on Sundays we do services.  
Everyone very welcome!  
Do ask Bob (07980 801928) for details.



## General Description of the Benefice Community

### Demographics and Rhythms

Across the Benefice, communities are a mix of permanent residents and second-home owners. There are strong traditions of hospitality and seasonal celebration, especially around Easter, harvest and Christmas. Life in our villages is shaped by a broad mix of agricultural rhythms, tourism - both hiking and sightseeing - arts and music events, with resident communities who are deeply rooted to place.

The Benefice lies within the Cotswolds, one of the most attractive and in parts more affluent districts in Gloucestershire. Across our five parishes, the total population is approximately 1,300.

According to the Church Urban Fund lookup tool, in terms of national deprivation rankings (where 1 represents the most deprived parish out of 12,239 in England), all our parishes fall around the mid-point, reflecting a relatively average level of need.\*

This means that while our Benefice is located in a generally prosperous area, we are not without challenges, and we remain attentive to local needs, including rural isolation, housing affordability, food poverty, and the changing nature of village life. Several of our churches actively support the Cotswold Foodbank, which is based in Guiting Power, recognising that rural hardship is often hidden but very real.

\* Church Urban Fund lookup tool



## Section 12. The Role

We are praying for a Priest-in-Charge who will walk alongside us with faith, warmth and wisdom—someone who will share in the life of our communities and help us grow in faith, fellowship, and service. We are looking for a person who finds joy in rural ministry, values the beauty of tradition, and embraces the possibilities of renewal. Someone who brings light into the room—a sunbeam who lifts others, encourages faith, and reminds us that God works through welcome, laughter, and everyday kindness.

### We are seeking someone who is:

- Rooted in prayer and able to inspire faith in others
- A good listener—pastorally sensitive, approachable, and compassionate
- Joyful, resilient, and open to both tradition and change
- Energetic, with an outgoing personality and a natural ability to connect with people
- A confident and collaborative leader who encourages lay involvement
- Someone who delights in the countryside and the people who live here
- Able to communicate the message of the Church in clear and accessible ways, helping new or occasional churchgoers feel welcome and included

### We hope they will:

- Lead worship that is creative, dignified, and spiritually nourishing
- Strengthen our mission, especially among families, children, and newcomers
- Support our church school and help mentor young leaders
- Be visible and present across all our communities, offering encouragement and care



## Section 13. Contact Information

Key contact for the Benefice Simon Wallis [s\\_wallis@hotmail.com](mailto:s_wallis@hotmail.com)  
07919 687165 (Guiting Power)

- **Temple Guiting:** Ruth Waller  
[ruth1waller@outlook.com](mailto:ruth1waller@outlook.com)
- **Cutsdean:** Ros Hartnell  
[hartnellros53@gmail.com](mailto:hartnellros53@gmail.com)
- **Naunton:** Jane Pickup  
[janeepickup@gmail.com](mailto:janeepickup@gmail.com)
- **Lower Slaughter:** Karen Randles (Benefice Administrator)  
[k.e.randles@btinternet.com](mailto:k.e.randles@btinternet.com)
- **Upper Slaughter:** Paul Trenaman  
[pjtupton@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:pjtupton@hotmail.co.uk)
- **Farmcote:** Peter Loveday  
[peter@farmcote.net](mailto:peter@farmcote.net)
- **Temple Guiting School Foundation Governor:** Moira Anderson  
[moira@andersonpage.com](mailto:moira@andersonpage.com)

## Section 14. Further Information

- Cotswold School website
- Temple Guiting Church of England School website
- Link to School virtual tour
- Kingham Station
- Moreton-in-Marsh Station
- Guiting Manor Amenity Trust
- Guiting Events
- The Welcome Directory

# Full Parish Profiles



## Guiting Power

Guiting Power is a welcoming and community-minded village with a strong tradition of shared endeavour. The church, *St Michael & All Angels*, sits peacefully at the southern edge of the village and is open daily to visitors and locals alike. It plays an active role in village life, hosting events such as the Easter Fair, Open Gardens, Soup & Sale, and Christmas Fair, and contributes to the Village Fête. As many events as possible take place in the church itself.

Regular worship includes two services a month, with strong festival attendance—113 at the 2024 Carol Service—and Tuesday morning prayers led by congregation members when needed. Highlights include Easter Dawn communion in the churchyard and Rogation services in local barns. Hymns are played using a tablet and speaker, and the church is always beautifully decorated.

The committed PCC is supported by a churchwarden, chapel warden (Farmcote), treasurers, secretary, Deanery Synod rep, and a long-serving verger, with volunteers helping maintain the church and grounds. The church supports the Cotswold Foodbank, belongs to Inclusive Church, and shares regular updates on *A Church Near You*. Outreach includes delivering a Christmas card to every home and active involvement in village life, from the pantomime to the music festival.

Challenges include an ageing congregation, limited volunteers, and significant roof repairs, but there is strong community support and a clear desire to grow, welcome newcomers, and explore new forms of church life. As one resident put it, we hope for “someone with a human touch, able to relate to anyone.”



## Farmcote

Peaceful and truly rural, with spectacular views to the west, and at its heart St. Faith’s encompasses a thousand years of history surrounded by a small and dedicated community, welcoming many walkers and “pilgrims” of the Cotswold Way.



## Temple Guiting

Temple Guiting is a small but active Cotswold village with a strong sense of community and a good mix of ages. It is supported by a well-used village hall, a cricket pitch that hosts regular matches in the summer, and a much-valued Church of England Primary School at the heart of village life. The village has deep historical roots, dating back to the Domesday Book, and was once a settlement of the Knights Templar.

At its centre stands the Grade I listed church of St Mary’s, built in the 12th century and home to both ancient stained glass and a striking modern window by Tom Denny. The church offers a range of worship, including traditional services, reflective Taizé evenings, and outdoor Wild Worship that draws on the beauty of the surrounding countryside. The recently refurbished organ supports musical worship, and the re-ordered West End—with pews removed—has created a flexible space for coffee mornings, concerts, talks, and seasonal gatherings.

The church has a close and joyful relationship with the village school. Children come into church regularly for worship and special services throughout the year, including Christmas, Easter, and Christingle. They clearly love being in the building, and their energy brings warmth, laughter, and new life to the ancient space.

St Mary’s remains a focal point for village life, not only through regular worship but also through events such as the much-loved Daffodil Walk and Safari Lunch, both of which attract wide support from villagers and visitors alike.



## Cutsdean

Cutsdean is a small, friendly, and welcoming village with a strong sense of community and a genuine commitment to church life. A mixed-age group of residents regularly supports St James’ through key duties such as cleaning, flower arranging, graveyard working parties, and fundraising events. Despite its size, the village shows remarkable dedication and warmth.

The church holds one service a month, which is consistently well supported—not only by locals, but also by members of the wider Benefice, some of whom enjoy walking across the fields to attend. Services are followed by coffee and cake, offering a valued opportunity for fellowship and conversation.

Set in beautiful countryside, Cutsdean reflects the rhythms of the agricultural year. In spring, the fields are alive with the sound of lambs calling to their mothers; summer brings the hum of combines and the rush of tractors; and in autumn, headlights from late-working machinery glow across the landscape as crops are sown before the weather turns.

A notable feature of village life is the **Cutsdean Community Orchard**, established 16 years ago when 16 residents came together to restore an overgrown plot at the edge of Cutsdean Farm. With the support of Lord Wemyss (Stanway Estate), and the help of pigs to clear the ground, the orchard has flourished. Today, it is a cherished shared space producing fruit, juice, and honey, and stands as a symbol of the village's collaborative spirit.



## Upper Slaughter with Eyford

St Peter's at Upper Slaughter is often listed among the most beautiful churches in rural England. Nestled beside

an ancient ford crossing the River Eye in this "Doubly Thankful Village", the church welcomes over 4,000 visitors annually. One of the Benefice patrons, Francis Witts, lives in the parish and actively supports the church.

The congregation is ageing but faithful, with 15–25 attending regular services and up to 90 for major festivals. A small PCC shares responsibilities effectively, and the Parish Share is paid in full.

The village is home to a generally older population, with a few young families. There is a good proportion of full-time residents alongside second-home owners and a number of AirBnBs.

Community life is supported by the nearby village hall, which hosts meetings, post-service gatherings, and fundraising events. A particular highlight is the annual church fête, which brings together residents and visitors for a day of celebration and support for the church. In addition, a regular warm space is held every second Tuesday at the Lords of the Manor Hotel, offering tea, coffee, biscuits, and an opportunity to relax.

Upper Slaughter maintains strong links with its neighbouring parishes and contributes fully to the shared life of the Benefice.



## Lower Slaughter

Lower Slaughter is a picturesque and internationally known Cotswold village, with *St Mary's Church* at its heart. The village has a mix of permanent residents, second homes, and holiday lets, and a vibrant local life supported by a Village Hall, Cricket Club, nearby Equestrian Centre, and year-round tourism.

Regular events include a spectacular Village Fête which draws visitors from far and wide, Christmas Party, fundraising for Temple Guiting School, art exhibitions, and community classes. A few families have lived here for generations, while others have relocated from across the UK and abroad.

The church welcomes thousands of visitors each year. Though there is currently no Churchwarden, a small and cohesive PCC shares responsibilities effectively, and the Parish Share is paid in full. The PCC works closely with the Village Hall Committee on community events and fundraising. A dedicated flower team decorates the church

for Easter, Whitsun, the fête, Harvest, Remembrance, and Christmas.

Lower Slaughter is a fully engaged member of the Benefice, collaborating regularly on services, events, and fundraising. Shared Benefice services take place on fifth Sundays and key occasions, including outdoor worship such as Easter Sunrise Communion and Rogation walks. The village also features on the opening titles of *Escape to the Country* and was a filming location for *EMMA* in 2020.



## Naunton

St Andrew's, Naunton, seeks to offer services and events that reflect our commitment to being *the church in the community*. Our church is open every day, all day, and we are heartened by frequent visitor comments that "this church is obviously well-loved."

We have a small but steady congregation for regular services, and our festival services are very well attended—

over 100 people came to the 2023 carol service. In addition to the usual festivals—Christmas, Easter and Remembrance—we hold a special annual *Spirit of Naunton* service to celebrate all that is good in the village. This tradition, now more than 20 years old, takes the service out into the village—most often to the Black Horse pub. We also host the annual Benefice Easter Activities and Christmas Crib Services for children.

The church plays an important role in Naunton's social life. We run a popular drop-in Coffee Shop in the church every Thursday morning, welcoming villagers and visitors alike. On the first Tuesday of each month, we host *St Andrew's Cinema*—held, perhaps uniquely, in the church itself. This has been a successful way of helping non-churchgoers feel at home in the building (the fully licensed bar may help!). *Naunton Music* ([nauntonmusic.org.uk](http://nauntonmusic.org.uk)) brings world-class classical musicians to perform four live chamber concerts each year in the church.

These events are part of our commitment to being *church in the community*, but they also play a vital role in supporting the church financially. We hold a range of fundraising events, including a popular series of talks by a local archaeologist and several Burns Night celebrations. Alongside these, charitable giving remains a key priority. We've hosted annual Lent "soup and bread" lunches for external causes, and our Autumn charity coffee morning and festival service collections regularly support charities such as the North Cotswold Foodbank.

The PCC is well supported, with eight non-clergy members. While we do not currently have designated

churchwardens, a strong and committed team shares out responsibilities. One member of our congregation has recently applied to train as a lay worship leader.

St Andrew's has an active band of bellringers and a 15-strong church choir made up of Naunton villagers who support special services throughout the year. Several members of the congregation also serve as Sunday Visitors at a nearby Category A prison, taking part in prison worship around once a month.

Naunton itself is a lively and engaged village. There is a thriving pub, an active Social Committee, a large and well-used village hall, a cricket club, and a group dedicated to the care of our historic dovecote. Social highlights during the year include a Progressive Supper (with each course hosted in a different home), a *Fish 'n Fizz* party, a popular Bonfire Night (drawing visitors from miles around), a Cheese and Wine evening, and *Naunton Open Gardens*. The Social Committee also organises a wide range of one-off events throughout the year. Church and village news is shared regularly via email and social media: [nauntonvillagehall.co.uk](http://nauntonvillagehall.co.uk).





*“Churches and School working together to share God’s love in our communities”*