The Parish of Elstree & Borehamwood

Parish Profile

http://www.borehamwoodchurches.org.uk
1. Location

The Parish of Elstree and Borehamwood is located 8 miles south of St Albans on the southern boundary of the county of Hertfordshire bordering greater London. It lies between the M1, M25 and A1 road links and is served by the railway on the Bedford to Brighton line. Elstree and Borehamwood station is just 20 minutes from St Pancras International, which makes the capital very accessible and the town attractive for commuters. The neighbouring parishes are Radlett, Shenley and Barnet with the Diocese of London on the southern boundary.

2. Community

Geographically the parish approximates the civic boundary of the Elstree and Borehamwood Town Council, and is surrounded by a pleasant greenbelt. The parish falls under three levels of local government: Elstree & Borehamwood Town Council, Hertsmere Borough Council and Hertfordshire County Council. The Civic offices of EBTC and HBC are located in Borehamwood. The present population is estimated at 38,500 and rising which represents a 15% increase on the 2001 census figures of 33,400.

Historically, Elstree is the older of the two communities and dates back to Roman times. It is located on the Roman road of Watling Street, and in the 1st and 2nd centuries the settlement was a centre for pottery and tile manufacturing. During the 18th century the village was a staging post for coaches travelling between London and St Albans. New roads were created through the Enclosure Act of 1776, when land on Borehamwood common was also endowed to the church. With the arrival of the Midland Railway, which opened in 1868, the foundations were laid for expansion and development.

At the turn of the century Borehamwood was a small village, and in 1901 the population was just 1323. In 1909 the first church was completed, and in 1914 the emerging new film industry began to establish itself. Rapid growth began in the late 1940’s and early 1950’s through the post war-building boom. Families were relocated from London, to the new purpose built London County Council Housing estates, which spread around the village to create the present town. Echoes of the old village identities still survive, as well as the community building spirit of the first generation to move into the town.

Since the recession in the 1980s, Elstree & Borehamwood has moved away from manufacturing based industries to retail, office and
distribution centres, and a number of national companies are based locally. Economically, the town seems to be riding the present financial insecurity, however there is evidence of disparity between household income and opportunity amongst residents.

The town has a strong film industry and heritage, and is home for a number of national and international productions. BBC Elstree Studios and the Elstree Film Studios are both situated in Borehamwood, where ‘Holby City’, ‘Eastenders’, ‘Big Brother’ and many other popular TV shows and films are produced. Elstree Studios is owned by Hertsmere Borough Council, and through its management company houses over 40 different productions. The local churches and church halls have been used in many productions.

The town centre facilities include a cinema, health & fitness centre and swimming pool. Allum Lane Community Centre is the largest community venue, and the BECC family centre on Furzehill Road has recently enhanced provision. A new library, museum and community facility beside All Saints church opened in 2012.

Educationally, the parish is served by 9 primary schools and two secondary schools. Hertswood is a specialist arts college and the only non-selective secondary school in the town. The second, Yavnah, is a Jewish voluntary aided high school, with specialist status as a Business and Enterprise College serving North London.

The population has changed quite considerably over the last 15 years and the community is increasingly ethnically diverse. This is reflected in the present schools intake and the composition of our congregations.

Ecumenically, the churches support each other through the Elstree and Borehamwood Christian Council. The ten member churches include: Roman Catholic, Lutheran, URC and Pentecostal, and the churches undertake a wide variety of shared activities. The Christian Council has longstanding relationships with sister churches in Fontenay aux Roses, and Offenburg, our civic twin towns in France and Germany.

Reflecting the increasing diversity of the area, Hertsmere Forum of Faiths meets regularly to bring Christians, Jews, Muslims and Hindus together to share understanding and common concerns.
3. Four District Communities

The life of the Parish and Team Ministry is focused on the 4 distinct but interdependent communities of St Nicholas, All Saints, Holy Cross and St Michael & All Angels. Regular church going is at levels typical of urban areas, but people continue to look to the Established Church for the occasional offices.

St Nicholas is the oldest of the four churches and was rebuilt in 1852, although there has been a place of worship on the site since at least 1188. The church has close links with the St Nicholas Church of England primary school, which is voluntary aided.

All Saints, was completed 1909, and has an adjacent Garden of Remembrance and closed churchyard. It is centrally sited on Shenley Road. The congregation is diverse and mixed, and most are new members within the last 5-7 years. All Saints has an electoral roll of 86 and serves a population of about 12000.

Holy Cross was completed in 1954 as a daughter church to All Saints to serve the south eastern segment of the town, and was originally a dual-purpose building with a hall added later. Holy Cross has an electoral roll of 36 and serves a district population of about 6000.

St Michaels & All Angels, was also built in 1954, and currently has the largest congregation in the parish. The congregation is also diverse and creative, and is seeking to develop its work amongst children and young families as well as its music.

‘Messy Mass’ is well supported and making an impact. St Nicholas has an electoral roll of 45 and serves a population of around 5200.
The attached hall is a well-used focus by the community, and the district serves the most deprived ward in the town. St Michael’s has an electoral roll of 79 and serves a population of about 12000.

All four church communities are within the central tradition of the Church of England and are accustomed to the Eucharist as the focus of worship, the use of vestments, and the reservation of the sacrament. However, each church community has its own particular character, approach and personality. Each church is of equal status as parish churches. District boundaries are largely administrative and help the clergy team to delineate each team vicar’s responsibilities, and resource ministry to the whole parish. The occasional offices are central to our understanding of parish ministry and style of outreach, and are the responsibility of the local team vicar unless s/he needs to seek assistance from colleagues. Baptisms and marriages have slowly declined in keeping with the national trend. For efficiency, funeral bookings are managed by the parish office, following a managed diary system. There are about 100 funerals in the parish each year taking the clergy to three or more different crematoria. As part of our ministry to the bereaved, the parish hosts six-monthly memorial services for the recently bereaved.

4. The Team Ministry

The Elstree & Borehamwood team was constituted in 2005, when two separate parishes joined together, building on a team established in 1979. Whilst the principals of collaborative ministry are well established, the challenges and joys of the partnership in contemporary parish ministry are on-going.

The PCC, guided by a Standing Committee, has legal responsibility for the whole of the Parish and meets about 5 times a year to oversee parish-wide activity.

The team constitution states that the objectives of the team ministry are:

• To create a structure that can effectively provide Christian fellowship, worship, mission and service to the town of Elstree & Borehamwood as a whole and to its various parts.
• To base that structure on separate congregations which are i) of equal status, ii) inter-dependent, and iii) united in commitment to the first objective above.
• To develop a pattern of ministry among clergy and lay people that is
not limited by geographical boundaries, but relates to all areas of life experienced by those who live and work in the town.

Coming together for joint activities and worship, and the sharing of resources are an important part of the team ministry. The parish has a shared diary of events across the churches, which has in recent years included joint Advent, Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Lent courses (sometimes ecumenical) and Holy Week activities. All the churches join together for at least 3 Parish Eucharists during the year, including an outdoor service in August and patronal services in rotation. The churches share in hosting the bi-annual bereavement services, as well as joint marriage & confirmation preparation. Regular worship in residential care homes is undertaken ecumenically, but with a substantial Anglican involvement. Schools across the parish are a priority, and there is regular contact with most primary schools, and with Hertswood Secondary by invitation. The parish has agreed policies on baptism and marriage, extending to second marriage. Children are admitted to communion at the age of 7 after preparation normally at our annual joint service for Pentecost, and 19 children were admitted this year.

The PCC assumes responsibility for parish share to the Diocese, parish office and payment of the parish secretary, clergy expenses, all church insurances, child protection policy, and joint activities.

5. Finance

The Parish currently holds ‘Mission Aided Status’; this entails help from the Diocese, both financially and practically. It is expected that new members of the team will rise to the challenge of improving stewardship and increasing attendance at each church.

All out of pocket expenses, including mileage are reimbursed. The parish provides a contribution to telephone and Internet access in each of the Vicarages.

St Michael & All Angels

The Church Hall is a major contributor to the entire Parish share, representing circa 34% of total in 2014.

It is planned to increase the interface with people new to the Church, The current projects being considered include the Alpha course.

In recent years St Michaels has been bequeathed several estates, these have been used primarily to bring the fabric of the building to its current high standard, as well as providing a small reserve for the unexpected.

St Michaels has a good financial status, and maintains an even credit balance from year to year.

St Nicholas’

Despite our annual Stewardship campaign we do fall short on our Parish share, but as the new refurbishment of the back of the Church should be ready in mid May we hope that letting this out may help our finances.
As there is no hall available in the village, apart from the school, which is often busy. We hope there will be some demand for this space. It seems always the same people who put their hands in their pockets when asked and they are getting fewer as the congregation ages. We need to find some new ideas for fundraising.

6. The Clergy Team

The current deployment indicator is 336, and the present stipendiary team is comprised of two full-time clergy and two part-time. The Team Rector, Tim Warr is based at All Saints, and at present St Michael’s has the other full-time clergy member with St Nicholas and Christine Hina at Holy Cross housing the two on a part-time basis. So far as possible, the team shares the responsibilities of the incumbency from their respective district bases, but there is scope for flexibility and complementary sharing and development skills.

The clergy team meet alternative weeks during school term-time, hold regular away-days, and an occasional residential conference. The team has agreed policies covering all aspects of Team activities, including part-time working.

In 2015 Shane Blanchflower a member of the St Michaels congregation, entered training as a Licensed Lay Minister (Reader) this is a new venture for the Parish, and it is anticipated that this will be embraced, utilised and built on in the Parish as a whole.

The parish clergy are ably supported by a part-time parish secretary, Mrs Kathy Foster, who is based in the parish office at All Saint’s
Archdeaconry of Hertford

Barnet Deanery

Profile for the Benefice of St Michael & All Angels, Borehamwood
St Michael & All Angels Mission Action Plan

Our Looking

Three things we have seen about our parish and our world
  1 People are always 'busy'; they come and go. Churchgoing faces much competition.
  2 The local population is increasingly mixed - ethnically and religiously.
  3 Parts of our district are statistically amongst the most deprived in Hertfordshire.

Three things we have seen about our church
  1 The establishment of a parish Local Ministry Team - 5 of 6 lay members from here.
  2 Some growth in our Junior Church, but not in adult attendance.
  3 Our hall is now a busy venue for community activities of many kinds.

Our Discerning

How we want to be described in five years’ time.
Moving forward confidently and growing under new leadership, with increased lay involvement in all areas, built upon the LMT, with a mixed all age congregation and lively Junior Church, setting the pace amongst our 4 parish churches.

Our three key priorities for the next five years.
  1 To draw all people into discipleship (through Christian Initiation).
  2 To reconnect with former or occasional churchgoers especially amongst the active elderly.
  3 To be at the heart of the wider local community through 'The Big Local' programme.

Our five key SMART goals for the next year or more.
  1 To raise awareness and acceptance of our diversity and offer friendship to all.
  2 To develop our worship styles: non-Eucharistic and with congregational participation.
  3 To open our church more and provide better information and literature.
  4 To encourage greater participation in small groups.
  5 To keep our buildings in good repair following the 2012 Architect’s Inspection.
Setting

St Michaels District covers 2 Local Authority wards with a population of some 13000. It comprises both owner occupied and rented accommodation and the population covers all age ranges. One ward, Cowley Hill is designated an area of Social Deprivation and has been awarded Big Lottery Funding because of the high number of single parent families, poverty indications, health problems and benefit claimants. The District also has 4 Primary schools, 3 Care Homes, sheltered housing, a Day Centre and places of worship for other denominations and religions, including a Synagogue. There has been a large influx of newcomers to the parish to occupy the large numbers of houses and flats built in recent years. The attractive Aberford Park, with a lake and play area, is opposite the church, there is a good bus service and local shops close by.

Vicarage

The vicarage is in a good state of repair and adjoins the church. It comprises 4 bedrooms, 2 living rooms, study and usual offices. It also has a large garden to the rear, which has been adequately maintained, as well as a grassed area at the front, with a driveway leading to a detached garage.

The Church & Worship

Our church has links with the local Forum of Faiths, the Christian Council and the local food bank, as well as being involved with the Civic Festival, held over 2 weeks in June, the Civic Service, Christian Council events, Remembrance and Holocaust services and on-going Community projects. We are a central traditional church, with vestments, reserved sacrament and occasional incense. The congregation spans all age groups, is welcoming to newcomers and we enjoy our music. We have an organist who plays regularly. We also have a thriving Junior Church with very enthusiastic leaders as well as a ‘knit and natter group’ who meet regularly. The Mothers Union meets monthly in the church room and there are various social events during the year which included a trip to the Bath Christmas market in November 2014, as well as visits to local restaurants for social meals and quizzes raising funds for good causes.
Of the Baptisms each year, most are for families who have little regular church attendance but who appreciate contact after the ceremony, which we try to maintain with anniversary cards and invitations to special services. We are keen to have contact with children and young families as well as the elderly. The number of couples asking to have their wedding ceremony in church is increasing, which is encouraging as we find that some couples maintain their contact with church both before and after the ‘Big Day’.

### Church Building

The church itself is modern, built in the 1950’s and has been well maintained with no major work outstanding, merely annual routine maintenance. All items mentioned in the 2012 Quinquennial report have received attention. Any preventative maintenance or repairs are dealt with as necessary. There is a thriving church hall (with a stage and fully equipped kitchen) attached to the church, and this is busy virtually all day every day with regular weekly groups and occasional children’s parties at weekends. It is a major source of our income.

**We are looking for:**

A vicar with life experiences, who has already been in charge of a Parish or District of a team, would be ideal. A person who is prepared to build on established links in the community would also be appreciated as our primary schools visit the church on occasions and welcome the local vicar to lead school assemblies. The same applies to the Care Homes who also appreciate a small service once each month. There is scope for liaison with the local Air Cadets, who will have need of a Padre. Our District also has a Homeless Families unit and a hostel for young women and girls from disturbed backgrounds. We need a vicar with drive and enthusiasm to continue the work already established in the District and Parish, to increase our profile locally and face the challenge of increasing our numbers, to be open to new various styles of worship which will include music, all age groups and to encourage worshippers wherever they are on their journey of faith. A ‘hands on’ vicar who is prepared to be fully involved in all aspects of church life, including the mundane and everyday tasks if necessary would be ideal.

**What we can offer you:**

- A warm welcome from a friendly, committed congregation
- Help and support from a team Parish
- Dedicated DCC
- Support and backing from a traditional family orientated church
- Regular social interaction and events in the community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Catchment Population</th>
<th>13 000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average Attendance</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In last 12 months:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baptisms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weddings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funerals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Archdeaconry of Hertford

Barnet Deanery

Profile for the Benefice of St Nicholas Church, Elstree
St Nicholas’ Mission Action Plan

Our Looking

Three things we have seen about our parish and our world
1 District is becoming more mixed and Jewish population is growing - now two synagogues in Elstree.
2 There is a lack of meeting places - had three pubs, but now have none.
3 Have recently lost our Post Office.

Three things we have seen about our church
1 We are a small church, but want to be a welcoming community.
2 We have two established weekly congregations - one Sunday, one Wednesday - Messy Mass.
3 We have very strong links with St Nicholas' Church of England School.

Our Discerning

How we want to be described in five years’ time.
We would like to be a friendly and growing Church where all are welcome, a place of support for Church members and the wider community, a place where we can experience inspirational worship to help us live the Christian life.

Our three key priorities for the next five years.
1 To complete the re-ordering of the West End of the Church to provide a more welcoming, comfortable and useful space.
2 To assess our entrance requirements and move forward with necessary change.
3 To work on our publicity through banners, leafleting, website and local publications.

Our five key SMART goals for the next year or more.
1 To explore what it means to be a praying Church.
2 To continue to support and nurture our young organists.
3 To continue to nurture Messy Mass and begin to build links between the two congregations.
4 To encourage the Sunday congregation to sit at the front of Church to aid worship and fellowship.
5 To begin the process of rejuvenating the West End of the Church by removing the back pews.
Setting

St Nicholas’ Church sits on Watling Street, an ancient Roman Road, in the centre of the old village of Elstree. The district incorporates the village with 2 small shops, the Musician’s Estate (originally all social housing, now some private), and a large prosperous area with a few very large houses and wealthy residents. A number of small offices operate out of Elstree such as 2 estate agents, 2 dentists, and a doctor’s surgery. There are between 30 and 40 new industrial units/offices in an estate discreetly bordering the A41 with a modern hotel. There is also a small light industrial estate with 3 or 4 units near Aldenham Lake, a local beauty spot, built by French prisoners of the Napoleonic War, close to the village. There is a good connection by rail to St Pancras, which takes about 20 - 30 minutes, which makes the area popular for commuters.

Elstree, having previously been a Parish in its own right, has been part of a wider Parish of Elstree and Borehamwood since 2005, with a Team Vicar rather than a Rector. The boundary of the district is the railway line to the east separating it from Borehamwood and the A41 to the South West.

The district population is approximately 45% Jewish, with around 10% Muslim and Hindus. There is a liberal synagogue with which we have a cordial relationship. There is also a Shtiebel at the bottom of the High Street which has been converted from a pub. In the past five years, all of Elstree’s pubs have closed, as has the Post Office. The Church does not have a separate hall but a meeting place at the rear of the church has been approved and the changes are imminent.

Church School

St Nicholas School is the only Church school in the wider Parish. It is a primary, Voluntary Aided school with 210 pupils. It has a very mixed intake, including a much higher than average percentage of pupils for whom English is not spoken at home. The school is therefore very ethnically diverse. In the past 10 years the school has improved through the hard work of staff and governors and has moved from “Cause for Concern” to “Good”. Our last SIAMS inspection was “Good” and we are aiming for “Outstanding” next time around. The school is a significant focus in the Church’s life. Pupils come to Church at least once every two weeks (and parents are invited to all school services), they have a Calmer Courtyard and Meeting Shed for prayer club etc. at the school. School values are promoted at Church and vice versa. Major festivals are shared together. Children are prepared
for communion at school and we have been running a thriving monthly Messy Mass in Church as an after school club for the past 4 years. We have recently started a monthly Sunday school, which is well attended. There is a Worship Group drawn from Year 6 pupils, which works with the Vicar to plan worship through the year. Foundation Governors are drawn from the congregation at St Nicholas’ Church, as well as other Churches in the Parish. There is a large secondary school in nearby Borehamwood and there are also several large private schools nearby such as Haberdashers’ boys and girls and Aldenham School.

**Church Building**

The present church, which is Grade II listed, was built in 1852 in flint to replace an earlier one dating from 1360 though there was an original one on the site before 1188. The inside wall of the bell tower is partially 15th century and the font and south door are dated 1460. Some collar beams in the roof also date from then as do the base of three octagonal pillars in the south aisle. The inner doors of the porch are mid 20th century and are decorated with pictures of St Nicholas in coloured wood. They are to be repositioned to make way for glass doors as part of the refurbishment of the west end. The spire is covered in cedar wood shingles and has been restored in the last year.

The church sits in a rural graveyard, now closed, which includes a number of war graves and the resting place of Martha Ray, long term mistress of the Earl of Sandwich, who was murdered by a spurned suitor in the mid 18th century and whose coffin was found intact under the chancel when the church was being rebuilt. Flowers are sometimes left anonymously on her grave on the date of her death. There is a lych gate on the west side of the churchyard, which dates from 1909. There is also a small reserved area near the church for the encouragement of wild life.

The church is similar to many others built at this time and is really only of historical note for its remnants of earlier walls. The inside is typical of most Victorian churches with stained glass windows, two from the factory of William Morris, and a great deal of richly carved wood. It has one pew in the front of the south aisle, which has ‘FREE’ on it to denote that it was not reserved! The stone font is 15th century and is where Sir Richard Burton the explorer was baptised and where Charles Dickens was once a Godparent. The beautiful lime wood font cover is quite recent, having been made in 1974, and was carved by Siegfried Pietzech. In 1893
there were 3 bells in the Tower but these were increased to 6 in 1879. They were re-cast and hung in 1955. Unfortunately we don't have a team of ringers and so they are rung only at weddings or by occasional visiting groups of ringers. The Church has a full NADFAS report. Our Quinquennial inspection was carried out early in 2013. Very little had been completed on the fabric of the building for the previous 15 years but the majority of the work required has now been completed.

Reordering

Last year, the DCC decided to remove some of the back pews to provide a social/meeting/coffee shop area. The carved inner entrance doors bearing the story of Bishop St Nicholas are to be taken down and hung at the back of the South aisle where they will be better able to be admired. They will be replaced by glass doors in order that people may be able to see in to the church when the outer doors are open in the day time and also in order to make the church more accessible and welcoming. We believe that this project is much needed for the village and the Church. These plans are on the cusp of being put into action and will hopefully be completed during April. The DAC have given us much encouragement for this project for which we received a Faculty at the end of December 2014.

Worship

St Nicholas has central/catholic style worship. Alb and stole are worn for the weekly Eucharists. There are all age services (also Eucharistic) twice a month. The congregation on a Sunday is small (usually between 20 and 30). The majority of the regular worshippers from 10 years ago have now died or are unable to get to Church. We have a very mobile population and many of the families who join us do so for only two or three years before moving on to a cheaper place to live! However, due to a constant emphasis on mission, we continue to bring in new people, especially through the relationship with the school. For example, this year our DCC of 10 people has 4 new members on it. We have been very encouraged by the willingness of new members over the past couple of years to get more involved, and we are constantly looking at how we can support them further in their Christian life. We get between 20 and 30 people to our Messy Mass and around 20 to the monthly Sunday School. We have several weddings and funerals (we have an open and two closed Churchyards) each year, and around 10-12 baptisms. We have systems in place to invite all these people back. We operate an open baptism policy. There are a number of special services each year (Crib service/ Nine Lessons and Carols/ Remembrance Day etc.) in which we fill the Church.

St Nicholas Church, in conjunction with the school, supports the Children’s Society, Christian Aid and the Borehamwood Food bank. It does not presently fill all its spaces on the Team PCC, nor does it have a lay representative on the Elstree and Borehamwood Christian Council or the Local Ministry Team. This is primarily because we are a small Church where all but a few people are new. It is hoped that after a year or two of nurture and encouragement, we may be more outward looking again in our involvement in other committees (if people don’t move before then!). Stewardship is always a struggle. All our regular members do give regularly, and we have a serious stewardship campaign every year. We are conscious that a proportion of our congregation has a limited income. We have been able to plan our
re-ordering due to fund raising over around 25 years, into a restricted account. Our repairs from the Quinquennial have been undertaken financed by a bequest from a Parishioner several years ago.

**The Vicarage**

This was built in 1968 and is a 2 storey, 5 bedroom brick built house with a single garage. It is set in about ½ acre of mostly grassed garden. It is situated in a quiet spot with woodland on two sides opposite the church primary school and only a short distance from the church.

**We are looking for a half time Vicar who:**

Is a spiritual leader who has vision, drive, energy, humour and has a strong calling to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ

Is a good communicator who can establish a rapport with all sections and ages of the community, and is seen about in the district and takes part in local activities

Can foster the contribution of lay members in leading aspects of church life, including some parts of worship

Is confident to offer spiritual and moral guidance to the school community, is part of the school family and can inspire young people to attend Messy Mass and the new Sunday School which have brought so many more families into the congregation

Can demonstrate strong leadership in all aspects of their work and can understand the particular challenges that present themselves in such a mixed ethnic and religious community

Is willing to develop the pastoral care, visiting and outreach work of our church

Is able to maintain a good work-life balance

**We will offer you**

- A warm welcome!
- Spiritual and secular support and encouragement locally and from the wider Parish
- An opportunity to live full-time and work flexibly part-time in a friendly environment with responsibility for a particular district but the opportunity for wider involvement across the Parish
- A well-situated and pleasant vicarage very close to the church with a good-sized garden
- The opportunity to work in a Parish alongside three other churches in an area close to London yet with a more rural atmosphere
- A choice of several state and private schools in the area
- The presence of the Elstree Film and TV studios in Borehamwood which make for a vibrant and lively neighbourhood and the amenities of a tennis club and golf club nearby.