Archdeaconry of Hertford

Barnet Deanery

Profile for the Joint Benefice of South Mymms and Ridge

www.stgiles-stmargarets.co.uk

St. Giles Church South Mymms EN6 3PE

St. Margaret's Church Ridge EN6 3LH
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1 A NEW INCUMBENT FOR THE JOINT BENEFICE OF SOUTH MYMMS AND RIDGE

Our churches may be ancient, but we have a vision for future growth and progress, so we are looking for:

A Vicar to help us fulfil our hope for the future. We are friendly communities and we want our churches to welcome in new members, and to provide Christian witness fit for the 21st Century. We are here to serve the needs of our communities.

Our Vicar will help us:

- to meet the needs of our communities, accepting and using our diverse traditions,
- by leading us in pastoral matters,
- by having a thoughtful and well-expressed approach to sermons, and to teaching (confirmation groups, study groups and so on),
- by having good communication skills, being ready to use social media,
- by working with us, being ready to delegate administrative matters,
- by having an interest in and a facility with children’s and youth activities, to develop further the links with St. Giles School and young people in the villages, and
- by promoting the mission of the church, using the wealth of beauty at both churches, both in the buildings and in church activities.

Our two congregations offer worship with slightly different flavours and wish to maintain and develop our traditions so we can meet the variety of ways people find fulfilment in worship: this offers you an opportunity to spread the Word to the whole community. We are looking for a strong commitment to proclaiming and interpreting the Word, joy in celebrating the Sacraments, and leading us forward in Prayer and Study.

The churches are very much part of our two villages, and you will work with the wider community, helping the churches to be visible in the life of the villages. Within the Deanery there are opportunities to share ministry with our neighbour churches, and also with Churches Together in Potters Bar. The appointment is part-time, but support can be made available from other churches.

In return we will offer you:

Our support through prayer and in practical ways as you develop and sustain the two village communities in their Christian worship and witness.

The Vicar’s expenses are paid in full, and there is a house for duty. The churches reimburse the expenses of visiting priests in accordance with Diocesan practice. There is no regular secretarial help, but the officers of the two PCCs are experienced in much, if not most, aspects of church administration, and provide administrative support on a voluntary basis.
## 2 OUR MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>St. Giles South Mymms</th>
<th>St. Margaret’s Ridge</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Our Visions are:</strong></td>
<td>St. Margaret’s is a welcoming church trying to meet the needs of people in the village and around in their spiritual and everyday life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To be an open and growing church with more children and families,</td>
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<tr>
<td>• To involve local people who feel the church is a ‘good thing’ but who are not regular churchgoers.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Our priorities are:</strong></td>
<td>To develop more involvement in the church building and churchyard, leading onto an interest in what goes on inside</td>
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<tr>
<td>• To encourage the villagers to come into the church for special events and get involved in church life</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Develop the church for village activities.</td>
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<td><strong>In the light of these priorities our goals are:</strong></td>
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<td>• To use musical and other events to encourage involvement;</td>
<td>• To plan events more thoroughly and advertise by word of mouth, leaflets, parish paper and website.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• To open the church weekly for tea and coffee and for social chat with light music;</td>
<td>• To involve the villagers in friendly working parties, inside and outdoors.</td>
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## 3 THE BENEFICE

The Benefice comprises St Giles, South Mymms and St Margaret’s, Ridge. South Mimms (the church uses the ‘y’ spelling, but the village is South Mimms) lies to the west of Potters Bar and was in the County of Middlesex until 1965, when it became part of Hertfordshire. It is close to Barnet, St Albans and Hatfield. Ridge is a small village to the north-west of Barnet, and has always been part of Hertfordshire. It adjoins South Mimms, and covers mainly rural countryside south towards Barnet (across the A1) and north towards London Colney and Colney Heath. The area enjoys good transport connections to London and towns in the Home Counties, while still being a countryside area in the Green Belt.
4 WORSHIP

Both churches are served by one Vicar. St Margaret’s’ morning service is at 9.15, whether Holy Communion or Morning Prayer. St Giles’ morning service is at 11.00, normally Sung Eucharist. The Vicar takes School services fortnightly in School and in Church on an alternating basis: these are attended by the whole school (some 100 children and staff).

At St Giles the main service is Sung Eucharist, using Common Worship. On some Sundays (e.g. Harvest Festival) there is a non-Eucharistic Family Service, followed by refreshments and the second part of Communion. St Giles hosts evening Masses on Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, and a service for the recently bereaved at All Souls. Lent is marked by focussed study groups; and a full range of observance takes place in Holy Week. On Remembrance Sunday both churches join in an Act of Worship at the War Memorial in South Mimms, attended by a large number of the local community, followed by the British Legion Service in St. Giles. Harvest Festival is celebrated in conjunction with the School with gifts from church and school distributed locally afterwards.

At St Margaret’s three Sundays in the month are celebrations of Holy Communion, using Common Worship. BCP Morning Prayer is said once a month. St. Margaret’s hosts a three-hour Meditation with music and readings on Good Friday 12-3 pm for the Benefice, holds a rural Rogation Service, a Pet Service and Harvest Festival. Family services are held at Ridge on Mothering Sunday and other services where children are expected. When in church, children help give out books and take the collection. Attendance had been falling at both churches in recent years, but there is now encouraging growth, including families with young children. Around 30 attend both churches each week (roughly 20 at St. Giles and 12 at St. Margaret’s). These figures rise significantly for services with Baptisms, and at major festivals, weddings and funerals. The age of the congregations is relatively high, though young parents with their children at both churches attend on at least one Sunday a month. Confirmation classes take place at need. At St. Margaret’s children are admitted to Holy Communion before Confirmation following preparation by the Vicar, but not at St. Giles.
All occasional offices are offered (baptism, confirmation, weddings and funerals). In the past year there have been 7 funerals, 4 weddings and 13 baptisms between the two parishes. Both churches still have open churchyards, though space for burials is now very limited and they may need to be closed in the near future. The PCCs’ policy allows only those who are resident in the parish or on the electoral roll, or who have some strong link with the parish, to be buried. This gives opportunities for outreach, for local families not yet connected with the churches. A portion of both churchyards is reserved for the burial of ashes, for which there is still adequate space.

St Giles has a unique dole service, the Bread Service on Christmas Eve. This is one of the best attended services of the year, attracting most residents of both villages, and is very popular with children and their families. Both churches also offer Carol Services at Christmas, and share in the Black Horse Sermon on Good Friday evening, in the Black Horse pub, South Mimms.

**Black Horse Sermon Good Friday 2018**

The music is traditional Anglican. St Margaret’s uses Hymns A&M Revised and Come and Praise; psalms are said, not sung. St Giles uses New English Hymnal, Hymns Old & New and Come & Praise; and the Folk Mass setting at the end of New English Hymnal. Child friendly hymns feature at Family Services. A small but enthusiastic choir at St Giles provides anthems at Eucharist, and performs for major festivals and at Carol Services at both churches. Each church has an organ, a Bevington at St. Giles refurbished in 1980, and a single manual small organ at St. Margaret’s. Both churches share the services of an organist.

St Giles uses vestments, incense, bells and candles, while St Margaret’s has a plainer church tradition, broadly in the middle of the Anglican spectrum. People from either village will go to the other village’s church, according to their preference, and a few will alternate between the two to suit their particular spiritual needs at different times. The Benefice as a whole offers a wide range of practice to the community at large.
5 PASTORAL AND ECUMENICAL

St Giles has an Anglo-Catholic tradition, but since 2000 has worked on being the parish church for the whole village community, and has expanded its range of worship. St Margaret’s tradition attracts many of its worshippers from outside the parish, some of them travelling five miles or more to attend services. The two parishes work together to meet the range of spiritual needs within the area. Attitudes towards women’s priestly ministry are positive. The PCCs passed resolutions to accept women’s priesthood.

Applications for weddings from persons living outside the parishes are accepted only when there are historical links with the parish. A further pastoral opportunity remains to be explored further, namely connections with those who work, but do not live, in the villages, whether at the two research centres, or at the Motorway Services and associated businesses. The links with the School afford the Vicar an important opportunity for ministry, being ex officio a School Governor. The Vicar takes services in the School on alternate fortnights from those in St. Giles. In January 2018 a special event was organised by the School, a sleepover in St. Giles, to raise funds for the homeless.

Pastoral visits are essential. Lay support for pastoral work is minimal and could well be developed. There are no Readers or other formally recognised officiants (apart from those authorised to administer the chalice at Communion).

Opportunities are taken to keep both churches open at advertised times, although for much of the week they are kept locked between services and other events. St. Giles is regularly open on Tuesday afternoons (2.00-5.00 pm) and refreshments are available: there is a regular and growing attendance from the villages, and visitors. A singing group now meets on Thursday afternoons in St. Giles. Both churches are open for the Bike ’n Hike event in September, and on a number of other occasions. A feature of both churches is the attractiveness of their churchyards, places for quiet and beauty. Both have public footpaths running through them and the St. Giles churchyard has an abundant diversity of wild plants and flowers.
Both churches have a number of benefactions which can be used for Mission and Outreach (broadly interpreted). At St Giles, these are used to support children from poor families to allow them to go on school outings, and also to support families with particular needs. St. Giles is blessed with a major benefaction which enables its extensive churchyard to be maintained as a place of beauty and solace for the bereaved, as well as a resource for the community at large to enjoy. Benefactions have enabled the introduction of a sound system with CD and USB ports, and the provision of kitchen and toilet facilities. Both churches give a proportion of collections and donations to charities nominated by the PCCs and use their regular and special collections to enable Mission giving (Bishop’s Harvest Appeal, British Legion Fund, local Hospices, and overseas Missions). St. Giles PCC supports Fairtrade purchasing for coffee and tea after services, and has moved its CBF investments into the Ethical rather than the Income Fund. Both churches distribute their Harvest gifts to local residents and charitable institutions (Food Banks and the Poor Clares in Galley Lane, Barnet). At Ridge, Christmas collections go to ‘Save the Children’, and at St. Giles, Christmas and Remembrance service collections go to the Children’s Society and the British Legion respectively. Christian Stewardship is practised at both churches through envelopes and gift aid (now collected monthly where there are standing orders).

The relationship with other churches in the Potters Bar area is good. The clergy meet regularly and may agree to exchange duties. This helps to enable them to provide cover during holidays. Both churches have welcomed clergy from the rest of Potters Bar as well as Readers when the Vicar has been on leave. Churches Together in Potters Bar is represented by a member of St Giles, and there have been occasions for sharing ministry between the churches. Both churches host regular Saturday Breakfast Services for members from Churches Together. Both churches welcome members of other Christian churches to take Communion, and there are representatives of other denominations who regularly worship at each church. St. Giles Choir joins in special services at two of the Anglican churches in Potters Bar.
6 COMMUNICATIONS

The two parishes share a monthly magazine, the Parish Paper, produced by the churches, which is fully funded from advertising. It contains church and community news, together with articles both informative and entertaining. It is distributed free to every household and to people linked with the churches, but living outside the parishes. The current print run is about 500. It represents a service by the churches to the communities in which they are situated, and is another important form of outreach. The last Incumbent introduced pew sheets, which we hope to maintain during the Vacancy. Both churches are represented on A Church Near You (and further work on the entries is in progress). In 2006 a Website was created for both churches: www.stgiles stmargarets.co.uk and there is a St. Giles Facebook page.

7 LEADERSHIP

The Churchwardens at St. Giles and a Lead Team from the St. Margaret’s PCC take the lead in organising events. They also recognise the need to provide administrative cover for the parishes for the Vicar, given that the appointment is only half time, so that the Vicar’s leadership in pastoral matters can be most effectively used.

Meetings of both PCCs together and both sets of Churchwardens are rare but they are ready and willing to do so when necessary, for instance during vacancies, and for major celebrations. This is because PCC meetings are largely concerned with the specific matters relating to each church (liturgy, fabric, etc). The two churches share a number of important matters (Remembrance Sunday, the School, the Parish Paper and major social events). The Priest does not normally conduct the same business twice in each place.

The St Giles PCC has 11 members, and the St Margaret’s PCC has 6 members. St. Giles PCC includes the Churchwardens and the representative to the Deanery Synod, who is also currently on Diocesan Synod. Both PCCs are chaired by the Vicar, and meet about six times a year, in addition to the Annual General Meeting. Membership age range is 40-80 at both PCCs.

8 MINISTERIAL TEAM

There are no other members of the Ministerial Team, lay, or ordained. Given the proximity and good relationships with Potters Bar churches, and with churches in the rest of the Barnet Deanery, and adjacent Deaneries, there is reasonable support at hand for parishes of this size. There is good support from the Area Dean and the Archdeacon.
9 ELECTORAL ROLL

Currently there are 27 on the electoral roll of St Giles, of whom 17 are resident in the parish. There are 18 on the electoral roll of St Margaret’s of whom 5 are resident in the parish.

St. Margaret’s Church

10 ORGANISATIONS

Neither church now has a Children’s Sunday Group: it fell into abeyance about 4 years ago. There is no youth group attached to either church, nor a Mothers’ Union, although there is a (non-church) South Mymms Youth and Community Association, which provides a club for children between 8 and 14 in the South Mimms Village Hall: one of the supervisors is a regular member of St. Giles Church and the previous Vicar was a frequent helper.

Both churches have people who change altar frontals, prepare the sanctuary for worship and process the Gospel book, one of whom is a member of the Company of Servers. St. Giles has a small choir (normally leading from within the congregation) not robed, which sings anthems during Communion. A band of bellringers has recently revived (2018); it rings for services at St. Margaret’s only, but practises at both churches, and hopes to recruit members so that ringing at St. Giles may resume. The singers from St Giles choir assist at St. Margaret’s for Carol and other special services. At one stage St Giles offered a Mothers and Toddlers Group mid-week, but this facility is now at the Village Hall, with which the church does not wish to compete.

St. Margaret’s Ringing Chamber
St Giles was built between the 12th and early 16th centuries. In 1852 the first Tractarian vicar engaged G.E. Street to plan renovations, which were eventually carried out in 1877-8, in the spirit of the Oxford Movement. The church was re-roofed in 2000. In 2011 the base of the tower was converted to include a fully accessible toilet and kitchen unit, with new robe cupboards and a new Vestry screen: the back row of pews was removed to make space for social events. In 2017 the north aisle was carpeted, and more pews removed. New tables and comfortable stacking chairs were bought so that the area could be used for entertainment; seating for well attended services can be arranged. The church has a number of rare treasures, including pre-Reformation stained glass, two brass chandeliers restored in 2000, and two splendid tombs from the early 16th centuries together with a 15th century wooden screen around the Frowyck chantry Chapel. A number of legacies and trusts exist to help with flowers and fabric, including a major benefice to maintain the churchyard and church.

St. Giles is currently suffering subsidence in the north-east chantry chapel (Frowyke Chapel, sometimes referred to as the Lady Chapel), and along the north aisle of the church. This is a very long-standing problem, dealt with by Street in 1877. Signs of its return started in 2006, but were not considered serious until 2016, since when the chapel has been out of bounds to the general public. It is currently being overseen by Barker Associates, who have introduced the church to Structural Engineers and stonework conservators. Faculties have been obtained for internal and external investigations, and for the removal of a row of lime trees, which was one of the main causes of the problem (now removed, October 2018). The nave and tower are unaffected, and the north aisle remains in use, so the day-to-day work of the church is not much affected. It should not present a problem to an incoming Vicar, as the Churchwardens have the matter in hand. However at some point a considerable sum will have to be raised from grant awarding bodies. This may provide opportunities for involvement of the local community.

The fabric of St Margaret’s is in good repair and the PCC takes pride in this achievement. The parish has somehow managed to find financial support for the maintenance of the building, though recent necessary work has depleted disposable resources. The church has a fine medieval wall painting, and chancel furniture by the Robert Thompson of Kilburn (the “mouse man”). The church tower was augmented to six bells, hung in a new metal frame, for the millennium with the help of substantial grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund, Hertsmere Borough Council, residents’ donations, and fundraising by the PCC, the bell ringers and HCACR (Herts County Association Change Ringers).

A choir stall by Robert Thompson in St. Margaret’s
Both churches now use the same Inspecting Architect. Recent Quinquennial reports make a few major recommendations for essential works to both churches, and for planned maintenance over the five-year period to maintain the state of the fabric. At St. Giles there is external stonework to be renovated, as well as the issue of movement along the north side of the church (see above). Working parties provide basic housekeeping for the churchyards, and cleaning inside the churches. Both churches receive grants from Hertsmere Borough Council to pay for contractors to maintain their churchyards. These are both “open”, i.e. there is still room for burials, but only just. Both form an important natural resource for each village.

At Ridge there is an independent Village Hall beside the church. St Margaret’s can use the facilities of the hall on occasions. St Giles has made use of the South Mimms Village Hall and the School (other engagements permitting) for meetings, but with the addition of a toilet, a kitchen and storage in 2011, the church is now able to be used for meetings, concerts and other village events.

12 FINANCE

The latest audited accounts for both churches are attached. Currently both are able to live “within their means”, but need to be very careful with their funds. The annual Parish Shares are currently £6,540 for St Giles and £5,012 for St Margaret’s. In addition both churches enjoy sums invested from benefactions, as noted above (Pastoral and Ecumenical).

13 EXPENSES OF OFFICE

The Vicar’s expenses are paid in full, and there is a house for duty. It is situated in a quiet cul-de-sac in South Mymms (EN6 3PG), on the Ridge side of the village, so more or less
between both communities. There is access to the Vicar’s study, separate from the rest of the house, which is of a suitable family size (4 bedrooms); the garden looks across the fields towards Ridge. In addition, the churches reimburse the expenses of visiting priests in accordance with Diocesan practice. These, together with other joint expenses, are shared between the two parishes on a roughly 50/50 split. There is no regular secretarial help.

14 THE WIDER CONTEXT OF THE BENEFICE

14.1 COMMUNITY

South Mimms is a very ancient place at the divergence of the roads north to Hatfield, and to St Albans, from Barnet. The church dates from 1136. It formed part of the diocese of London until 1979, when it became part of the St Albans diocese, and was united with St Margaret’s, Ridge, in a joint benefice. The motorway service station and associated industrial and hotel complexes, as well as two research stations (Clare Hall Laboratories, part of the Crick Institute, and NIBSC) are within the parish. St. Margaret’s is also an ancient church, built in the fourteenth century by the Abbots of St Albans. Ridge is mainly rural, although the two research stations are very close to the village. St Margaret’s has farms and fields on three sides, with the village green on the fourth side. Public footpaths pass through both churchyards.

Formerly South Mimms covered the whole of Potters Bar, the northern part of Barnet and the western edge of Enfield. King Charles the Martyr, Potters Bar, was a daughter church of St Giles, founded in 1947, but today St Giles is separate from all the Potters Bar churches, while maintaining good links and relationships. The population is some 1700, 1200 of whom live in the village itself, as opposed to the outlying farms and other institutions. Ridge is much smaller, about 200 population, some of whom live east of the A1 in Galley Lane, leading into Barnet: there is no direct route across the A1 from Ridge.

Today the population of South Mimms includes a very wide mix: old village families whose names appear in the parish registers for the last two hundred years, people who have moved out from North London, and a number who commute to London. No single group predominates, and to some extent, different groups interact in a way which rarely happens in a larger community. Ridge also has a mix of housing, grand and modest. A number of Ridge parishioners live in isolated houses towards Barnet over the M25 and others towards Borehamwood. There is a mix of age groups, like South Mimms, with the majority being of middle age. It should be noted that both churches serve people from both villages, as well as others from further afield, so that the description of the two communities does not relate directly to the churches as such.

The two villages are situated near a motorway junction (M25/A1(M)). There are bus services in South Mimms to Potters Bar, St Albans, Watford, Borehamwood and Barnet, and thence rail and tube connections north and south. Therefore people living in the two villages can work at some distance. Conversely, the two research stations at Clare Hall and the
industrial area round the motorway services bring in a large day time population, as well as all the people who use the M25 services in passing. Note that Ridge itself has no bus service. It is a five to ten minute walk to the bus terminus at Myms End. There are taxi services from Potters Bar.

South Mimms has a (Civil) Parish Council, though the Ridge one is in abeyance at present. One of the Churchwardens at St. Giles is a member of the Parish Council. They are in the Borough of Hertsmere, and the County of Hertfordshire. Both villages have village halls. These have no formal link with the churches but are run as separate entities by their respective Village Hall Management Committees. In both villages the church is important to the local community. Villagers from both places exercise their rights to be baptised, married and buried there way beyond the actual core congregations of each church.

South Mimms has a basic shop, at the former garage (now a car wash) by the White Hart; there are shops at the Motorway Service Station (off the M25), including a Waitrose. 2 miles away the large retail park at Colney Fields has M&S, Sainsbury’s and other stores.

South Mimms is likely to expand in the next few years, with possibly 300 new houses to be built in and around the village. St. Giles PCC regards this positively, as expansion will bring better facilities to the village and potentially growth in the church congregation.

14.2 EDUCATION

Children from both villages attend infant and primary school at St Giles Church School (as well as other schools in Potters Bar and elsewhere): www.st.giles.herts.sch.uk

Potters Bar has two secondary schools, and children also attend schools in St. Albans and Barnet. The relationship between the churches and St Giles School is close, through PCC representation on the Governing Body, and by involvement of the Vicar coming to the School, as well as by regular visits to St Giles from the School for worship. There are no other schools or colleges in the two villages.

14.3 LEISURE AND RECREATION

Although many facilities for recreation are outside the two villages, in Potters Bar, Barnet, St. Albans or further into London, the villages enjoy active community events and venues.

There are two pubs in South Mimms, The White Hart and the Black Horse, and one in Ridge, The Guinea, and two village halls. They host regular social events (Quiz nights, bridge evenings and the like). All the pubs provide food in the day and the evening. There are small parks with children’s play areas in both villages. The Black Horse, South Mimms, has become the site for a Good Friday sermon delivered from behind the bar, and has also hosted dinners for the choir and South Mimms bellringers.
Both village halls are well booked on each evening and some afternoons, providing opportunities for dancing, exercise, bingo, mother and toddler groups and a youth club. Ridge Village Hall is used for meetings for people with disabilities and learning difficulties on weekdays.

The band of Ringers and the Choir are also a source of recreation; a small choir, the Ridge and South Mymms Singers, used to meet in St. Giles church, and both churches host concerts from time to time. At present there is an informal singing group on Thursday afternoons at St. Giles.

**15 TO SUM UP...**

**15.1 STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

A number of strengths have been noted above:

- The diverse and inclusive nature of both parishes, together and individually.
- The strong, supportive and friendly community spirit of the villages.
- The beauty of the churches and their attractive rural setting.
- St. Giles School, and its links with the Church.
- The mixed nature of the community, and its relationships with, and proximity to, neighbouring communities and centres of population.
- Communications to London and the rest of the region.
- The support offered by clergy in Potters Bar and the Barnet Deanery.

Weaknesses include:

- The age profile of both congregations, which is high: work needs to be done to reinforce a sustainable worshipping community in the 21st century.
- Congregations are not large, and need to grow.
- Finances and stewardship, while stable, need careful monitoring.
- The two churches have a tendency not to look beyond their immediate traditions and could do with awareness of the wider church, whether within the Deanery, within the Diocese, or within the wider world.

These are small country parishes: this is their charm, but also their challenge.
15.2 BUT – In the words of one of the St. Margaret’s Team, a regular contributor to the Parish Paper, addressing you, the applicant:

“Well, that’s the Profile of our two Churches. The pros and the cons. But as a person moving to live as well as work in a village, you should also be sure that the area will suit the life style you want. The first thing you might notice at first glance is the quiet and peacefulness of both villages (except when the children arrive and leave St Giles School). Indeed if you stand at the back of St. Margaret’s and look across the fields, or in the leafy shades of St. Giles Churchyard, it’s hard to realise that you are less than 20 miles from the centre of London.

“We’ve told you about good connections: to St. Albans in one direction and to Potters Bar in the other, for shops, entertainment and connections to London (average journey time to Kings Cross or Moorgate 25 minutes). The villages are also only minutes away from the junction of the M25 and A1M.

“So here is your opportunity: the joy of being part of a village community, the challenge of increasing the congregations at both Churches and the certain knowledge that you will have the full support of the two PCCs.”

November 2018

Grave of Joan Bruce Robinson, South Mymms whose father was a major benefactor of St. Giles Church.