St Martin’s, Shenley
in the Team of Aldenham, Radlett and Shenley
Diocese of St Albans
Parish Profile
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Introduction

Thank you for reading this parish profile and for considering whether God may be calling you to minister in Shenley. St Martin’s is a welcoming and community-focused church with good opportunities for growth.

Our previous Vicar moved to the Diocese of Newcastle in June 2020, just as pandemic restrictions were easing. We have restarted the services and activities that we can and our strong focus on supporting and working with the community has continued throughout. But there is a great opportunity for our new Vicar to work with the PCC to further rebuild after the impacts of the pandemic and both restart and reshape our activities.

Some of the key features of the role are:

- Ensuring St Martin’s is focused on what God wants for our church and village through prayer and action
- Spiritual and pastoral support for church members, building on the work of our lay-led shepherding scheme
- A need to work closely with and enjoy the support of the wider Team in Radlett and Aldenham
- The need to work in the community, within the church and building on our strong links with the wider village including ecumenical and inter-faith links, schools and care homes
- Working in a financially constrained environment in the most effective way
- An opportunity to lead a village church while being close to London, with good local schools and a large and recently modernised Rectory

We hope you will prayerfully consider whether being the Vicar of Shenley is the right role for you.
Who are we?

St Martin’s has over 100 members on its electoral roll, and there are a larger number of people in Shenley and the surrounding areas who have a connection with the church.

Informed by the views of church members, here are some of the main ways that people describe our church:

• The church is embedded in the community, with much of its work seeking to serve God in it while the community also supports the church

• A friendly and inclusive group of people who will talk to you and make you feel welcome and at ease

• A mix of people ranging from those who have lived in Shenley all their lives through to young families, with some church members travelling from nearby towns and villages

• A caring church family that aims to be supportive to each other

• Variety – our Sunday morning services are informal based on traditional worship, while the diverse range of ages and family status of people on our electoral roll means St Martin’s also seeks to offer other styles of worship, for example more family focused or prayerful such as Taizé

• We value sincerity and honesty above perfection
Our vision

Our overarching vision is to:

- Put God at the centre of everything we do
- Put our faith into practice
- Be outward focused

Our highest priorities are to:

- Show people God’s love through our services and action
- Be there for our people, deepening them in their faith and offering support when it is needed
- Build on our good links with the wider community and other faith groups in Shenley, becoming a more prominent presence in the village as a whole church with friendship and practical help
- Rebuild and update the range of services and events St Martin’s offers to be God-centred, attractive, encouraging, accessible and inclusive
- Grow the congregation (in both numbers and discipleship) at all ages

St Martin’s has challenges that make these priorities harder to achieve. We therefore also need to:

- Work to build teams to support our activities and enable our vision to be realised
- Grow our giving so St Martin’s has a sustainable financial future
- Improve the church facilities, making them fit for purpose and accessible to all
Our strengths

Our people

• A committed core congregation wanting to grow as Christians who care deeply about St Martin’s

• A larger number of people in the village who may not attend regular services but know the importance of the church’s work and support it

• Strong pastoral care in the congregation

Local connections

• With the Methodist church (including our jointly run Messy Church) and local Jewish community

• With the schools including the community village primary school

• With other local organisations including Shenley Park (where we have held services in the walled garden and Forest Church) and the Parish Council
Our strengths

The range of services and activities St Martin’s can offer

- Sunday morning all age communion services
- Family services and other prayer or praise focused services led by our Singing Group
- Weekly under-threes group
- Monthly Messy Church held jointly with the Methodist Church
- Monthly soup lunches, men’s and ladies’ breakfasts and one-off events like quizzes, meals, concerts and talks
- A church weekend away to Othona (a Christian community on the Essex coast) has previously been organised every two years

Support of the Team

- Working together with churches in Radlett and Aldenham to share resources
- Life courses such as Alpha, marriage preparation and confirmation are run across the Team

Church building and Rectory

- The church is a flexible space suitable for many types of services, activities and events
- A large and recently modernised Rectory with four bedrooms, situated right in the heart of the village a few minutes walk from the church
We hope our new Vicar will...

**Lead the church family:**

- Encourage and enable everyone to grow in their relationship with Jesus, in trust, love and service
- Develop strong personal connections with church members
- Provide sincere and dedicated pastoral care, comfortable with visiting and speaking to church members and those out in the wider community

**Lead our worship:**

- Preach with authenticity and spiritual depth with messages relevant to our daily lives, giving encouragement to all and deeper understanding of God’s word
- Be comfortable with different styles of worship including both family focused and more prayerful, while working to encourage all ages to attend Sunday morning communion services
We hope our new Vicar will...

Build on our links to the wider community

• Work with other faith and civic leaders to develop further joint initiatives and community schemes

• Consolidate our links with the local schools, taking an active role in occasional assemblies and events

Support St Martin’s as it adapts for the future

• Encourage (but not have to lead) the project to upgrade the toilets and parish rooms

• Support our work for St Martin’s to lessen its environmental impact and encourage positive change and sustainability

• Ensure St Martin’s is fully inclusive, supporting its involvement in the Diversity, Inclusion, Cohesion and Engagement (DICE) group led by the churches in Radlett
Who we are looking for – the person

The ideal candidate will...

- Be a prayerful person who can encourage others to develop in their faith, pray and read the Bible
- Be sincere and able to empathise with those in their care, dedicating the time necessary to the pastoral care of both young people and the elderly
- Be able to lead and importantly build teams, motivating church members and others to recognise and develop their individual gifts
- Be flexible in style of worship and able to adapt to ensure St Martin’s offers something for everyone while also able to bring together all ages where appropriate
- Welcome the opportunity to work with the Lay Minister at St Martin’s, to minister at other churches in the Team and to build relationships with all the team’s lay and ordained members
- Be enthusiastic in working effectively with children and families
- Be committed to the future of St Martin’s, possessing a vision of shared, collaborative ministry with the lay members of the congregation
- Be comfortable being part of a multi-faith community and continue to build and strengthen links with them including our strong links with the Jewish community
- Be capable of effectively using social media to encourage participation where appropriate
- Recognise the limits of their own time and energy, focusing on doing what they can well rather than too many things less effectively
Church life – leadership

St Martin’s is a relatively small church with no other full or part time clergy. We have no staff but have volunteers who generously give their time and skills, for example to tend the graveyard and church garden, clean the church, provide admin services, and run the singing group, under-threes group and Messy Church. St Martin’s also benefits from the support of lay members of the congregation and clergy in the Aldenham, Radlett and Shenley Team.

The key Lay Leadership roles are:

• A Lay Minister based at Shenley who assists in leading Sunday morning communion services
• Two churchwardens each with several years’ experience
• A PCC currently with 11 members, including the Treasurer and Safeguarding Officer

In the wider Team we can draw on the support of:

• The Acting Team Rector based at Aldenham, who will reduce his hours to a House of Duty role in 2022
• The Team Vicar based at Radlett, who has been in post since July 2021
• A Reader, and two Lay Leaders of Worship in Radlett, one of whom began ordination training in 2020
• Use of the Church Office in Radlett for professional administrative purposes
Church life – worship

This section describes the pattern of worship until the pandemic halted all services in March 2020. While the majority of services could now resume, the relaxation of restrictions has coincided with our vacancy. We have therefore not been able to restart Sunday afternoon and evening services. In any case, we are keen to work with the newly appointed Team Vicar to adapt and reshape our services to develop a manageable pattern that can be effectively resourced.

There are currently 107 members on our Electoral Roll, 90% of whom live in Shenley.

9:30am Sunday communion services

A communion service is held every Sunday morning, with the style of worship being traditional but relaxed. The service is based on Common Worship contemporary language, with both traditional and modern hymns accompanied by an electric piano. Average attendance in 2019 was 27 and during the vacancy since Covid restrictions have eased has averaged 20.

One Sunday a month is currently more family-focused which has been important at present while we cannot provide regular Sunday afternoon family services. We are keen to continue to encourage a wider range of ages at Sunday morning services.
Church life – worship

4:00pm Family services

Prior to the pandemic, a family service was offered on Sunday afternoons most weeks. These included:

- **Family Church** – an informal service with modern songs, a Bible story and a talk focused on being relevant to children

- **Messy Church** – this has restarted in September 2021, alternating in venue and leadership between St Martin’s and the Methodist Church as a joint venture

- **Film Church** – showing a family-themed film, including a short discussion half way through and the end to discuss what we can all learn from the story

- **Cafe Church** – family-focused with tea, coffee and cake, usually with songs led by a worship band

- **Forest Church** – making use of the countryside and footpaths around the village and Shenley Park

Average attendance at our family services during 2019 was 26.

We see a need to reshape our offering for families so we look forward to working with the new Vicar on a manageable and effective approach going forwards.
Church life – worship

Services have also previously been held at 6:30pm on some **Sunday evenings**, ranging from quiet Celtic evening prayer where only a handful may attend, to larger praise services, for example at harvest. Some of the most popular were:

- **Taizé services**, candle-lit and led by our Singing Group
- **Film services**, showing either a Christian or thought-provoking secular film, including a discussion about what we can learn and apply to our daily lives
- **Praise services**, focused on popular hymns and worship

Average attendance for these types of services in 2019 was 12. We would again be looking to decide with our new Vicar if and how to restart these types of services.

Other services in the Team open to all and where there will sometimes be a need for the Team Vicar in Shenley to minister include:

- 8:00am Sunday Said Communion at Christ Church, Radlett
- 10:30am Sunday Holy Communion at Christ Church, Radlett
- 6:30pm Sunday Choral Evensong at Aldenham
- 3:00pm first Sunday of the month service at St John’s, Radlett
- 10:30am Wednesday Communion at Radlett
Church life – Christmas

Like most churches, Christmas is a busy and exciting time at St Martin’s. Usual services include:

- Carol singing around the village on the Saturday evening before Christmas followed by mince pies and mulled wine
- Nine Lessons and Carols on the Sunday evening before Christmas – candle-lit and always very popular
- Nativity service at 6:30pm on Christmas Eve which is usually standing room only
- Midnight Mass at 11:30pm, candle-lit
- Communion service at 9:30am on Christmas Day

St Martin’s has also hosted Shenley Primary School’s carol concert and in the past each class in the school has come to the church for a lesson in the lead up to Christmas (and Easter).
Church life – annual events

There are several other key events in the church year for St Martin’s.

- Serving pancakes as an outreach opportunity on Shrove Tuesday and an Ash Wednesday service with imposition of ashes

- At Easter we hold a joint services with the Methodist Church on Maundy Thursday and Stations of the Cross on Good Friday finishing with hot cross buns, while on Easter Sunday we have held an Easter Praise service with our Singing Group in addition to the morning Easter communion service

- In early summer we have often held a service in the Walled Garden in Shenley Park. This is a beautiful setting for an accessible church service out in the open

- A Harvest Festival usually takes place at the end of September, collecting donations for the local Food Bank, with a harvest celebration meal at the church in the evening

- Remembrance Sunday is also an important time in Shenley. Following a service at St Martin’s we parade to the war memorial opposite the Rectory where we join with the rest of the village for a service and minute’s silence jointly organised with the other faith groups

- In late November St Martin’s has held a quiet Memorial Service to remember those who have passed away either over the last year or longer ago

- We also have a popular Christingle Service in early December
Church life – annual events – Walled Garden service and Remembrance
Church life – other activities

St Martin’s is lucky to have the flexibility to move the chairs in the church and this flexibility has made possible several other events each year, organised by lay members of the church, both for fundraising purposes but also as social occasions. Examples of these include an annual quiz featuring a live band, cream teas, barbecues, an art exhibition and barn dance.

Week-to-week we have an Under Threes group in our Parish Room which meets at 9:30am every Monday, particularly focused on supporting the wellbeing of young parents.

We have both Men’s and Ladies’ Breakfısts which each meet monthly on Saturday mornings at the cafe in Shenley Park. There is also a monthly Soup Lunch on a Friday lunchtime at the church, open to all but particularly aimed at the elderly.

The Singing Group was halted during the pandemic but we hope to resume this shortly with weekly practice during term time and singing at some Sunday morning services and key events.

A church weekend away to the Othona community on the Essex Coast has been organised several times. This is an opportunity to get away for fun family activities, thinking about the vision for the future of St Martin’s and worship at the ancient chapel. 40-50 people have attended the last couple of weekends.
Church life – Ecumenical and interfaith links

In addition to St Martin’s, Shenley is blessed to have Methodist and Roman Catholic churches as well as a thriving United Jewish Community which holds services at the Chapel in Shenley Park.

We work closely with the Methodist church including sharing the running of Messy Church, holding Lent Lunches and joining together for some services, for example on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday.

St Martin’s also has excellent links with the Jewish community through Rabbi Alan Garber. In recent years we have held occasional joint events including talks and mental health training courses.

There is an opportunity to improve links with the Roman Catholic church in Shenley.

Remembrance Sunday is the key occasion where all the faith groups come together to organise the service at the war memorial.
Location of Shenley

Shenley is a village in south Hertfordshire, five miles south of St Albans and surrounded by picturesque working farmland. Despite being inside the M25 it has a rural feel yet benefits from excellent links to the motorway network and is only 25 minutes to central London by train from Radlett station just two miles away.

Approximately 4,700 people live in the village which is in two distinct parts – the original village where the church and Rectory are located, and an estate built on the site of an old hospital in the 1990s. There are also plans for significant new housing in the parish.
The Shenley community

There is a strong community spirit across the village as a whole. The different types of housing have resulted in a mix of young families and London commuters as well as elderly and single people.

St Martin’s is situated next to the community primary school with which we have a good relationship. Most children move on from here to attend secondary schools in Borehamwood, Watford or St Albans. As well as helping with assemblies at the primary school, the Team Vicar also helps at St John’s C of E Infant and Nursery School in Radlett. There is also a Jewish primary school which has welcomed input from the Team Vicar on occasions, as well as three other pre-schools and a private primary school.

There are also three care homes for the elderly which we aim to visit regularly.
The Shenley community

The village is well served by two convenience stores, a Post Office, doctor’s surgery, pharmacy, takeaway, pub, Italian restaurant and a cafe in Shenley Park.

Shenley has a Village Hall used by various clubs and organisations including the Parish Council. We aim to be involved with many events organised by the Council including the annual fete. Shenley has Rainbow, Brownie and Cub packs. There is also a golf club, tennis courts in Shenley Park, football pitches and Shenley Cricket Centre which has hosted many international teams. Both the Arsenal and Watford FC training grounds are within the parish.

Shenley Park is a huge asset to the village which attracts visitors from across the local area. As well as the popular cafe it features a walled garden including outdoor theatre space and a large orchard from which apple juice is produced on site.
Church buildings – St Martin’s

St Martin’s Church was built in 1841 and is Grade II listed. The main church benefits from its adaptability, with chairs that can be moved to suit all kinds of worship or events. St Martin’s has a modern kitchenette at the back of the church that was installed in 2011 and has proved invaluable for serving refreshments at services and events. The main church is generally in good condition.

Attached to the church are parish rooms and toilets constructed in the 1970s. While still useable, they are now outdated and we plan to refurbish these substantially with new accessible toilets when finances allow.

There is a garden at the church which can be used for smaller outdoor events. The churchyard is at the north end of the village (Shenleybury) adjacent to the former St Botolph’s Church which is now a private residence. Maintenance of the churchyard is partly dependent on volunteers, with a group meeting once a month.
Church buildings – the Rectory

St Martin’s benefits from a large Rectory which includes four bedrooms, two bathrooms, a study with standalone access and toilet, and large reception rooms and kitchen. The Rectory was modernised and extended in 2015 so remains in good condition. It has a secluded moderately sized garden.

The Rectory is ideally situated in the heart of the original part of the village, opposite the pond and war memorial, with off street parking for at least two cars and is just a few minutes’ walk from the church.
Finance

Undoubtedly one of the greatest challenges faced by St Martin’s at present is its finances. In recent years income has declined as some generous givers have moved away. We are currently not able to pay our full Parish Share.

We have taken firm action to address this and in 2020 we prepared a detailed giving strategy with the aim of generating a surplus within three years. This has already had positive impacts, with an increase in the number of planned givers by around 50% by the end of 2020.

We are determined to approach this challenge positively and prayerfully without letting it dent our enthusiasm.

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<td>Repayment of borrowing from reserved funds*</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total expenditure</strong></td>
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* With our total parish share due being £36,100, had we not had to fully repay borrowing from our reserved funds, our shortfall would have been only £3,200.
The Team Ministry

The Team Ministry of Aldenham, Radlett and Shenley was formed in 2005, with three full time clergy and a Team Council with limited powers. Radlett and Aldenham are neighbouring villages of about 8,300 and 1,700 residents respectively.

There are two churches in Radlett: Christ Church and St John’s. An exciting project to provide a completely new and fit for purpose church is currently under construction at St John’s. Aldenham is served by the beautiful medieval St John the Baptist church.

The Team Ministers encourage and support each other in the whole mission of the church, working together and sharing resources where it is sensible to do so (e.g. for confirmation and marriage preparation). Joint Team services take place a couple of times a year.

The post of Team Rector may be held by any of the three Vicars and has generally been supportive and ‘light touch’. The Vicar of Aldenham is due to retire in the next three years and both the Vicars of Radlett and Shenley will be fairly new in post. A decision has therefore been made to temporarily suspend the Team Rector role when the new Team Vicar of Shenley is installed. It is envisaged that a Team Rector will be identified from the clergy in the Team once the overall clergy coverage has been confirmed following the retirement of the Vicar of Aldenham.

Each parish retains its separate legal identity and PCC, chaired by its own Team Vicar. The primary focus of the Team Vicar of Shenley is therefore on their own local community while supporting ministry in the wider Team.
Next steps

Thank you for taking the time to read this parish profile.

If you feel God is calling you to be the new Vicar of St Martin’s then we would be delighted if you were to apply for the role.

Please contact the Archdeacon of St Albans’ office for an informal conversation or for an application pack at archd@stalbans.anglican.org

The closing date for applications is 1 February 2022.

Shortlisting will take place on 9 February 2022 and interviews on 1 March 2022.

More information about St Martin’s can also be found on our website:

www.stmartinschurch.co.uk