

# ALL SAINTS CHURCH HOLBETON



**PARISH PROFILE**  
**March 2008**

## **All Saints Church, Holbeton – Parish Profile**

### **The Parish**

Is located in the beautiful South Hams in Devon and is bounded by the sea, the river Erme the main Plymouth-Kingsbridge Road (A379) and the neighbouring parishes of Newton Ferrers and Revelstoke. The church is in the village of Holbeton but the parish includes the hamlets of Mothecombe, Battisborough Cross, Luson, Gibb and Ford and has around 570 inhabitants. The land around the villages is mainly owned by the Flete Estate.

The village of Holbeton nestles in a valley with the parish church overlooking it. Properties consist of old houses some of which still belong to the Flete Estate and newer houses that have been built mainly on the edge of the village some of these provide relatively low cost housing for rent. There is a development of 14 houses (including some low cost housing) planned for the centre of the village in what was the Estate Mason's yard. There are three alms houses and six old people's bungalows. Flete House on the edge of the parish has been converted to retirement apartments.

About 30 years ago those living in the parish would mainly have worked on local farms or for the Flete Estate. In the 1970s as the Estate began to sell various properties members of the professions doctors, solicitors, barristers etc began to move in bringing new life to the village. The primary school which at one time was threatened with closure has expanded and now has around 100 pupils. There is also a well supported pre-school playgroup in the Village Hall.

The village Hall was built in the 1960s and has since been extended. It is well used by the different clubs and societies that flourish in the Parish, the Holbeton Players, WI, Garden Society, which holds a show each year, the Lunch and Social Club for the over 50's, which regularly provides lunch for 30-40 each month and arranges regular outings. The Village hall is also used for Yoga classes and by an Ecumenical group on Sundays. The Parish has a well established Twinning arrangement with Bodilis in Brittany.

During the summer months the village grows a little when holiday makers and second home owners take up residence. There is a general store/Post Office, two public houses, one a traditional village pub with B&B accommodation and the other converted to a gastro pub with a good restaurant. The sandy beach at Mothecombe is very popular and there is good walking along the costal path or on Dartmoor. Holbeton is about half an hour from Plymouth and so within easy range of good shopping, concerts, theatre and cinema.

## **The Parish Church**

Is dedicated to All Saints; it is surprisingly large and is filled with beautiful carving thanks to the Victorian ancestors of the owners of the Flete Estate who were responsible for the extensive restoration of the church in the late 1800s. All Saints is surrounded by a large churchyard in two sections. It is hoped to close the old part up to the boundary wall with the “new yard”, which has since 2007 had three allotments on one side. This has been possible due to the drop in the number of burials.

The worship is a happy mix of traditional Anglican and more open lay organised family worship. The monthly pattern of services is.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday – 9.30am Family Service led by a lay team.
- 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday – 10.30am Communion at Flete House
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday – 11am Parish Communion (Common Worship, Order 1)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday – 9.30 am Parish Communion (Common Worship, Order 1)
- 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday – 8am Holy Communion (BCP) and 6.30pm Evensong (BPC)

The Family service and the 9.30 parish Communion on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday are followed by fellowship and refreshments.

When there is a 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in the month there is a Together at 10 service of Communion which takes place in one of the three Churches in rotation. The churches also get together to mark the Patronal Festivals of the churches and on occasions such as Rogation and occasional services to celebrate something special.

The number on the All Saints Electoral Role is 68. The average attendance at weekly services is 20. This greatly increases at Christmas, Easter and Harvest Festival (the attendance at the various services over Christmas 2007 was around 900). For two weeks in the summer the Boys Brigade from St Jude's, Plymouth camp in a field at Mothecombe and help to swell the congregation. During 2007 there were 8 baptisms, 9 weddings and 8 funerals. The number of weddings was unusually high for All Saints. There are at present 3 weddings booked for 2008.

The hymn books in use are A&M New Standard and New Hymns & Worship Songs. The church owns a set of vestments in reasonable condition.

## **Other Activities**

A Prayer Group meets weekly and joins with those of the other churches on a rotational basis. The Prayer group have recently taken on the responsibility for the intercessions at weekly services.

There is a fine organist who has been playing for services at All Saints for over 50 years, but there is only a very small choir.

Although the village school is not a Church of England school they use the church for their Christmas Carol service and for an ongoing history project. It is hoped that the new Vicar will get involved with the school. The church is also used for an occasional concert. In the past there have been flower festivals on the themes of Weddings and Childhood.

There are a dedicated team of bell ringers but they have had problems in finding new members to join the team. There are also two groups of hand bell ringers one for adults and the other for local children. At Christmas the hand bell ringers raise money for a school in Watamu, Kenya. This has become something of a Parish Charity and in 2007 a number of Parishioners visited the school.

The committed team of flower arrangers make sure there are fresh flowers in the church and do an amazing job decorating the church for the big occasions.

The Parish has joined with five other Parishes in the Ivybridge Deanery (including Newton Ferrers and Revelstoke) to promote work with young people by supporting Ivybridge Youth for Christ, which works with young people at Ivybridge Community College, the secondary school to which most of the children from Holbeton go. They also plan to work in the villages running youth groups etc.

For the last five years very successful Lent Suppers have been held weekly during Lent. These have taken the form of a presentation by the Vicar or members of the congregation followed by a simple soup supper. They take place at a different house in the Parish each week and a contribution is asked for charity.

There are two very well run and supported community events each year, a Summer Fete in the Old Vicarage garden and a Christmas Fair in the Village Hall. They provide a major proportion of Annual fundraising.

A group of Parishioners organise a collection for charity seeking donations from those who use the Mothecombe beach car park in the off season Spring and Autumn. They have raised money for such charities as Shelter Box and Shekinah Mission.

The Parish Project Group was set up in 1995 to create the Parish Map which hangs at the back of the church. The Group has since made the altar frontal which is used at Christmas, Easter etc.

There is a monthly news letter "Holbeton News" which is produced with the help of sponsorship from organisations and individuals in the Parish. It gives everyone a clear idea about what is going on in the Parish. The "Church News" is distributed along with "Holbeton News" (300 copies).

A lay team organise and lead the informal monthly Family Service, which attracts families from the other two Parishes. They also arrange the very successful Christingle Service each year. During the Vacancy and the monthly Evensong has been taken by a lay member of the congregation.

A retired Navy Chaplain lives in the village. He was a Curate in the Parish on a house for duty basis from 1996-2000, he moved away and then returned. He and his wife are a great support to All Saints.

### **Church Building**

A separate All Saints Church Trust (Friends of All Saints) was set up in 1998 to take care of major repairs to the Church building. It successfully raised funds for the repair of the spire in 2000 and the complete restoration of the Eastern Lychgate in 2007. It has also funded the repairs that needed to be carried out following the last Quinquennial report 2004 (See attached accounts) The Flete Estate Staff check the roof on a regular basis and report that at some time in the not too distant future the roof will need replacing. The butane gas heaters in the main body of the church have reached the end of their life and are being replaced. This is being paid for partly by the Trust and partly by the PCC. The set of six bells also need attention.

Below the church is the old Reading Room now owned by the Diocesan Board of Finance but with the day to day responsibility falling on the PCC. Internally the building is divided into two rooms with kitchen and toilet facilities. Unfortunately the rooms are damp and in poor repair and are only used occasionally. A survey is planned to assess what renovation needs doing and people in the Parish are being asked for ideas for their use.

### **Finance**

As can be seen from the attached Annual Report and Accounts All Saints Finances are in good shape but the PCC is not complacent. For sometime now people in the Parish have been encouraged to make regular Gift Aided Contributions rather than putting the odd £1 in the collection when they come to church. The main fundraising events are the Summer Fete and Christmas Fair. The last Gift Day was in 2006. The Parish's contribution to the Common Fund is always paid.

**Rectory**

The Rectory is in Newton Ferrers but there is a Vicarage in Holbeton. Built in the mid 1950s it was last lived in by a Curate in 2000. Since then it has been let by the Diocesan Board of Finance.

**Websites**

[WWW.combinedbenefice.org](http://WWW.combinedbenefice.org) has pages for All Saints along with the other churches.

[WWW.holbeton.devon.sch.uk](http://WWW.holbeton.devon.sch.uk) the Holbeton School website, includes back copies of Holbeton news

[WWW.flete.co.uk](http://WWW.flete.co.uk) the Flete Estate website, good pictures of the area.