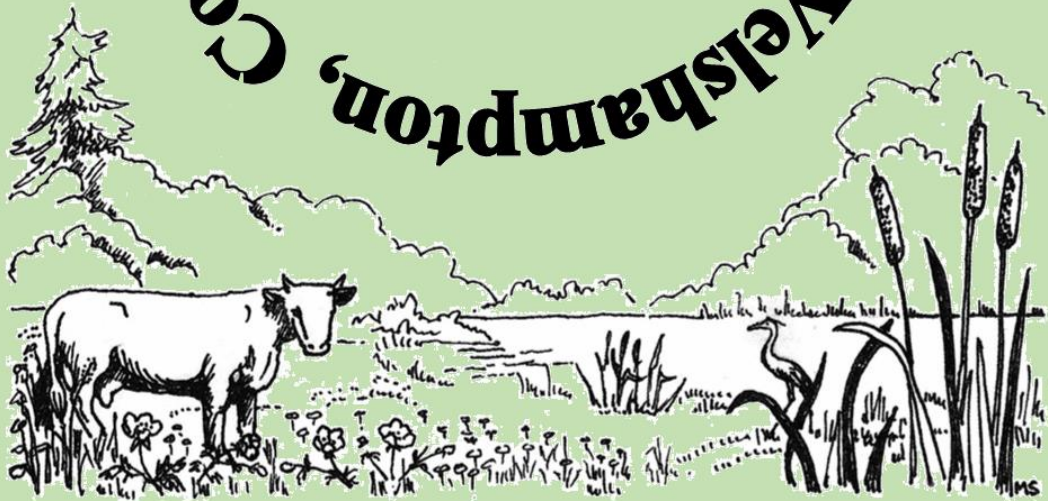




**Cockshutt, Lyneal with Colemere, Petton, Welshampton,**

The Benefice  
of the  
Meres and Meadows



## **Meres and Meadows Benefice - Foreword from Bishop Sarah**

The Diocese of Lichfield is a diverse, rich and exciting place to live and work. It lies at the heart of England, not just geographically but culturally and socially. There are areas of spectacular natural beauty that sit beside the legacy of centuries of industry and commerce, areas of urban deprivation and rural poverty beside places of aspiration, growth and hope.

What unites us as a Diocese is the invitation to “Come follow Christ in the footsteps of St Chad”. St Chad, the first Bishop of Lichfield, challenges us to humble, faithful and courageous mission in this part of the Midlands and in this generation. We are committed to the mutual flourishing of faithful Anglicans of all traditions, and to welcoming and honouring people of all backgrounds. We are inspired by our Diocesan Vision:

*“As we follow Christ in the footsteps of St Chad, we pray that the two million people in our diocese encounter a church that is confident in the gospel, knows and loves its communities, and is excited to find God already at work in the world. We pray for a church that reflects the richness and variety of those communities. We pray for a church that partners with others in seeking the common good, working for justice as people of hope.”*

We have identified three priorities as we seek to realise this vision more fully: to developing discipleship, encouraging vocation and inspiring evangelism. These priorities help us focus our work in all the varied forms of Christian life in the Diocese, in our parishes, Fresh Expressions, Schools, Chaplaincies and the Cathedral.

The priest appointed to the post of Priest-in-Charge in the benefices of Petton with Cockshutt, Welshampton and Lyneal with Colemere would be accepting an invitation to join us in this pilgrimage of faith. We will do all we can to support you to grow as a disciple, deepen your vocation and be a confident bearer of the good news of Jesus Christ so that you are equipped and ready to do the same for those with whom you are called to share in ministry. Is God calling you to join us?

†Sarah, Shrewsbury

### **Meres and Meadows: Foreword by the Archdeacon of Salop, Venerable Paul Thomas.**

Some years ago a book popular in Evangelical circles had the title 'Out of the Saltshaker and into the world.' It took its theme from the way Jesus describes his followers in the Sermon on the Mount: 'You are the salt of the earth.' It appealed for Christians not to remain separated from the world but to engage with it and bring a spiritual flavour to it. But worthy as the book's sentiments might be, they are mistaken because it is dealing with the wrong kind of salt!

'You are the salt of the earth' says Jesus. But he was not referring to the white granular chemical we know as sodium chloride and which we use in cooking and to sprinkle on our food. That kind of salt adds flavour or acts as a purifier or preservative, and that kind of salt *cannot* lose its flavour. So when Jesus warns that his disciples can lose their saltiness he can't be referring to table salt!

A clue to his meaning lies in describing it as '*salt of the earth*', where the word for *earth* means *soil*. The salt that Jesus is referring to is probably a kind of salt-like material or mineral such as potash or phosphate. Such substances were abundant around the Dead Sea area of Palestine and were used for fertilising the land and enriching the manure pile which was then spread on the land. This means that Christians are not simply the preservers of the good in society, nor are they merely agreeable folk adding flavour to an amoral or immoral society. Rather than focussing on their difference and distinctiveness from others, disciples of Jesus need to be 'dug into' and spread widely within the community around them. They should be a source of vitality and life-giving presence just like the salt in the soil.

Rural Christians are often good at understanding this teaching. They know that their presence as Christians will be deeply immersed in the 'soil' of village life, contributing in so many ways to the gestation and growth of important developments. When soil is frozen, or saturated with water or baked hard by the sun, the salt remains within it. When the soil is barren or when it is fertile the salt is present and active. It is mixed right into every part of the soil and will often be unnoticeable.

And what that also means is that the salt will be affected by the condition of the soil. The church has often been keen to give but reluctant to receive. It has occupied the high ground and been unsympathetic to other viewpoints, finding it hard to listen and learn. In short, it has fallen short of its vocation to be the salt of the earth.

The parishes of the Meres and the Meadows are deeply rural and seek a priest who will understand and sympathise with their particular context. Long-standing church members have created all kinds of connections with their neighbours and want them to be the means of linking church and community. They are looking for a Vicar who will encourage them, teach them, support them and work with them to let 'the salt' fulfil its potential. They love their churches and hope for a leader who will use those sacred sites imaginatively and inclusively. They long to express better the richness and relevance of being Christians living in love and solidarity with others.

Are these the kind of challenges that make you tick? Would you flourish by blending into this kind of church and community life? If the answer is 'yes' or even 'maybe' contact us to find out more. Take a step of faith in our direction and see if God might be drawing you to come and lead God's people in these very special places. Come and discover with them what it might mean to be 'the salt of the earth' in the Meres and the Meadows.

# Ellesmere Deanery

**Rural Dean the Revd. Linda Cox**

**Assistant Rural Dean the Revd. Pat Hawkins**

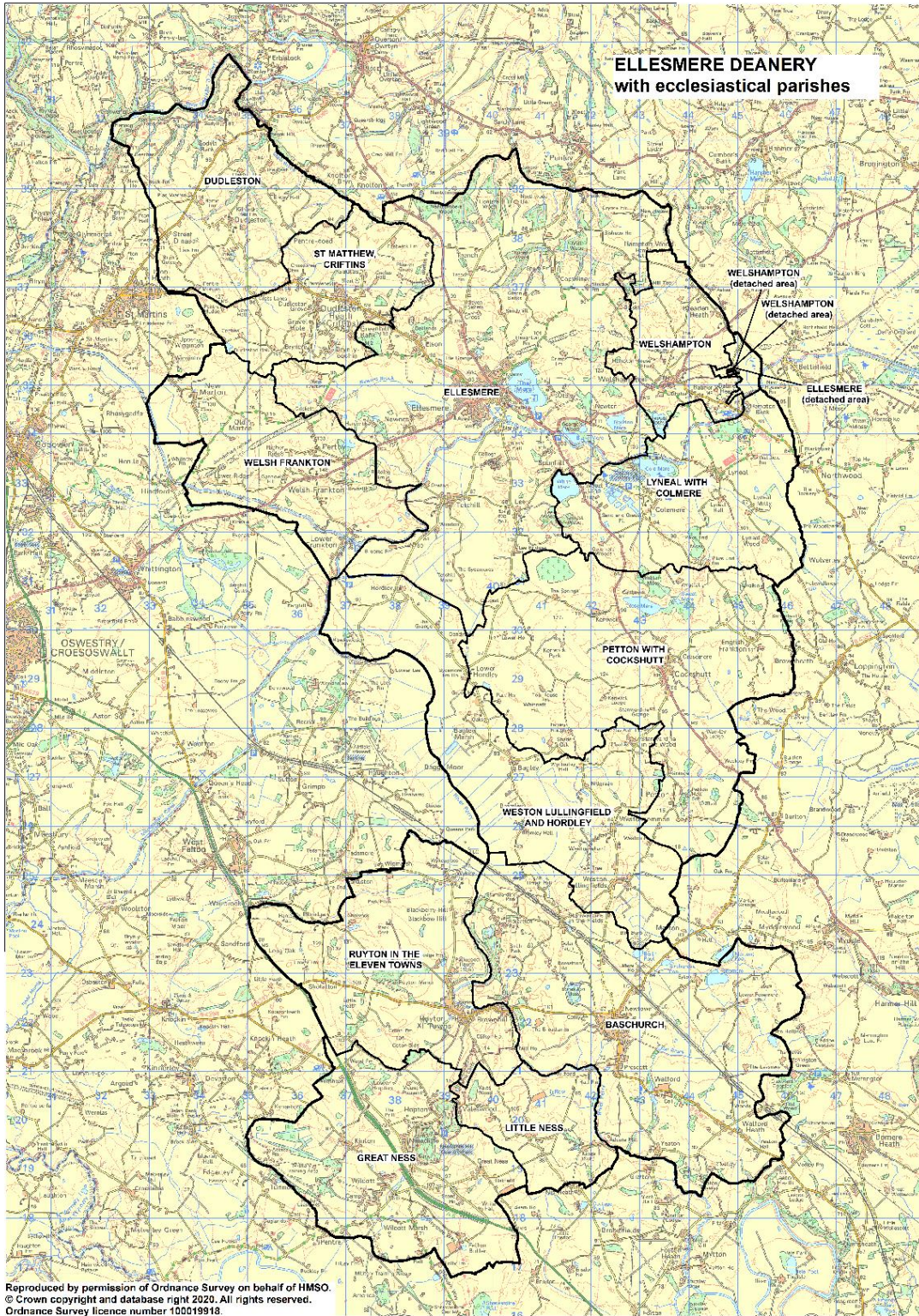
Ellesmere Deanery is a small Deanery consisting of 14 churches, split into 4 Benefices and 1 single church Parish in the small market town of Ellesmere. The Deanery is not far from the Welsh borders and mountain views are visible throughout the deanery. There are also two Meres; one at Ellesmere and the other Colemere, legend has it they were created by the retreating ice age. The area offers plenty of places to stretch your legs, all of which makes for a great place to explore and enjoy your days off.

The church has historically been important to these communities and this was seen to still be the case during the recent Pandemic, offering much needed support both physically and spiritually. Coming out of the Pandemic most churches have seen their congregations return, with new people joining them. As a Deanery we have been working hard at maintaining and building connections with our communities and seeking to reach people where they are. We have recognized the challenges of ageing and widely spread communities and the need for good communication. Going forward we are seeking as a Deanery to do more together instead of each trying to repeat the same thing across all Parishes. We are working at supporting each other with training and resources and the sharing of expertise, so that we are all better equipped to serve God in our communities and to make the Good News of Christ known.

The Deanery chapter, which includes those with Permission to officiate meet on a monthly basis for mutual support and prayer, occasionally we invite a speaker to these meetings.

The Deanery Synod meets three times a year where speakers are often invited to address not only the synod but also members of all our communities. We seek to make these meetings informative and helpful to our churches and communities. In 2022 we held for the first time a Deanery Day where we invited the Bishop of Shrewsbury to speak. It was a day of good discussion and conversations where friendships were made and people shared with one another. Many asked for the day to be repeated each year and we are looking at this for 2023.

As a Deanery we look to support each other and welcome you to come and join us in this often unknown county of outstanding natural beauty.



# PARISH PROFILE

## Index

Diocese of Lichfield	7
Our Benefice	8
Our Churches	10
Our Schools	18
Our Communities	19
Pattern of services	20
Church Statistics	21
The Rectory	22
Maps of the Benefice	23



# DIOCESE OF LICHFIELD

Stretching from the Welsh border to the Peak District; and from north Staffordshire to the Black Country; the Diocese of Lichfield is one of the largest in the Church of England serving just over two-million-people in 1,744 square miles.

The Lichfield Diocese is the Church of England in the North West Midlands. It traces its roots back to AD 656 when the Diocese of Mercia was formed. In AD 664, Saint Chad moved the seat of the diocese to Lichfield from Repton. The City's name means "Field of the Dead" and is believed to stem from the slaughter of 1,000 Christians in the city at the hands of the Roman emperor Diocletian. Lichfield has had a troubled past having been ravaged by the Vikings and laid siege to during the English Civil War. Over time the seat of the diocese was transferred to Chester, Coventry and then back to Lichfield in order to provide protection. In Chad's time the diocese stretched from the Welsh border to the North Sea; and from Northumberland to the Thames.





## Our Benefice

Based in the picturesque North Shropshire Lake District, close to the Welsh border, our Benefice is made up of 3 rural Parishes with 4 churches within an 8 mile radius. We are largely a farming community with several larger industries nearby. The Benefice has a relatively low level of un-employment and a low crime rate. There are two primary schools in the Benefice, although they are small they attract young families to the area.

### *Mission and Outreach:*

- Colemere Sunday School meets on the second Sunday of the month at 10.00 in church.
- Family services are held in Colemere Church at 10.00 on the fourth Sunday of the month and in Welshampton Church at 10.30 on the second Sunday of the month
- Messy Church meets in Cockshutt Church on the third Sunday of the month at 3pm
- There is a Church of England Primary School in Cockshutt and Welshampton (see page 18)
- Advent and Lent courses are shared with the Methodist Church in Welshampton
- A popular Benefice Magazine is produced each month including all the church news but also news from other organisations in the parishes

### *Members of the Benefice Team include:*

- One PTO Reader
- One PTO member of the clergy
- 6 Church Wardens, 3 PCCs with the usual officers
- Altar Servers
- Sides-people and Welcomers
- Chalice Assistants
- Messy Church Team
- Family Service Team



### *Music in our churches*

All four churches use Hymns Old and New with CD players. However, there are two organists who play the organ regularly at Cockshutt and Colemere and occasionally in the other two churches, and there is a small Benefice choir. The last Rector produced service booklets for all the seasons of the church year and these are still being used in all churches

### *Our Area*

We are truly blessed to live in such a beautiful area, with its seven meres. The Shropshire Union Canal runs through the Benefice and we are surrounded by Nature Reserves and SSSI sites (Sites of Special Scientific Interest), Peat bogs at Bettisfield and Whixall Mosses and the Shropshire Union Canal which passes by Colemere, Lyneal and Welshampton.

Shrewsbury the County town is only 12 miles away. It is the home of Darwin and has many beautiful buildings from various periods of history. The Old Market Hall in the square now boasts a café and film theatre and across the river is Theatre Severn which among other great acts holds a very special Pantomime every year. Shrewsbury also has a large indoor market which has been voted the "Best in Britain". Another excellent outdoor market is held weekly in Oswestry just 12 miles away. Wrexham is 16 miles and Chester, Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham and Telford being between 30 minutes to 90 minutes journey.

The nearest local town is Ellesmere, which offers a small weekly market in the town hall and a full range of shops and supermarkets.

The area is very popular with cyclists, walkers, bird watchers and nature lovers.

The A5 is easily accessed from the Benefice which leads to the M54 and the M6. The nearest train stations can be located at Shrewsbury, Wem, Gobowen and Chester, some with direct routes to Birmingham and London. Local airports at Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham all conduct international flights. There are bus services through two of the villages but a car, motorcycle or bicycle are very important if you live here.

# Our Churches

## *Petton - with Cockshutt*

### *St Simon and St Jude Church Cockshutt*



The Church of St Simon and St Jude, was completed in 1777, replacing a chapel of ease dedicated to St Helena. The building is Grade 2 listed with several monuments in the churchyard having their own separate Grade 2 listings. The clock was a later addition in 1789 built by Bullock and Davis, apprentices of the world-renowned Joyce family of clockmakers who established their original sundial and clockmaking business in the village.

The church is open every day and we try to encourage visitors each weekend from Easter to the end of October.

Common Worship is used for our Eucharist and Messy Church is held monthly on the third Sunday. In addition to the main festival services we hold a Remembrance Service, and a Christingle service on Christmas Eve,

There are several other services in church throughout the year where the primary school are involved.



The War memorial sits close to and facing the main road at Cockshutt.



Winter flowering Jasmine by the church porch



Messy Church is held in Cockshutt on the third Sunday each month, led by a lay team

We have a small group of regular helpers and families ranging in age from a few months old to 80+



In September 2021 we held a big party to celebrate our 10<sup>th</sup> Birthday and return after the Covid pandemic

In June 2022 we had our first Messy Church Baptism welcoming two brothers into the church family.



*Palm Sunday 2022*

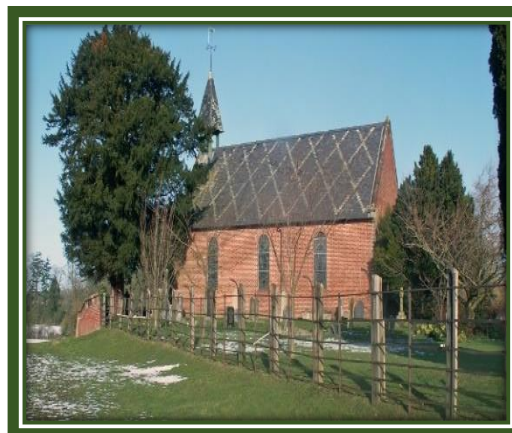


*Pentecost 2022*

# *St Raphael and St Isidore Church, Petton*

## **Introduction**

Petton is a small hamlet off the A528 between Ellesmere and Shrewsbury. The houses and farms are scattered along the lanes, and Petton Hall, a large Victorian mansion, is now divided into eleven apartments. The population is approximately 83, including 10 children and 11 pensioners. The church and the post-box are the only public facilities.



## **Church**

St Raphael and St Isidore Church is a small brick building situated in the middle of a field. However, the interior is far from plain - box pews, a gallery, Jacobean pulpit and exquisite painted glass windows. There was a church on the site in the 12th century, the present building dates to 1727 and is in good repair. An eco-toilet has been recently installed in the church garden and new benches to sit and enjoy the beautiful view. In 2022 the church received a Gold award in the diocesan church yard competition as well as Nature Awards.

Festival Church status has been applied for which would open the church to more community activities and 6 services can be held each year.

## **Congregation and Worship**



The congregation is small, and a mix of Anglicans, Methodists and Roman Catholics. Holy Communion is celebrated once a month. The congregation increases for festivals and the church is full for the annual Carols by Candlelight service. Community events are very well attended such as Pop-up-Pub, BBQ, and there are plans to start a film night.

# *St John the Evangelist Lyneal with Colemere*



## **Church**

The church, designed by GE Street in 1869, is now grade 2 listed, enjoys a unique and beautiful elevated position mid-way between the two villages, and looks down over Colemere country park and lake. It houses an organ of historic importance. The main structure and furnishings are still as in

the original design. However, to make the building more welcoming and user-friendly, major improvements, including toilet and kitchen facilities, have taken place over the last few years.

## **Churchyard**

Colemere has won the Lichfield Diocesan award for Best Kept Churchyard 6 times. It is linked with the adjacent woodland area which itself has won numerous Nature Friendly awards. It is used regularly by visitors, the Sunday School, Brownies and Guides and is an area for quiet contemplation and reflection. Both these areas are maintained by volunteer members of the congregation and are always open to visitors. The Garden of Remembrance was created in 2010 for the interment of ashes.

## **Liturgy**



*Young Church with the Easter Garden*

Common Worship with sung responses is used at services of Holy Communion, where sharing the peace is important but as yet is expressed by waving to each other. Lay people lead prayers of intercession and administer the chalice.

The family service and Young Church are led by lay people. The family service is informal with children actively encouraged to attend and participate.

*Young Church taking part in the Nativity Story*

Music is provided at our services through the organ, keyboard and CDs. We have audio-visual equipment and are fully licenced to play music and video clips and DVDs.

*Young church by their notice board in Church*



## Sunday School

The Sunday school is run by a team of four and generally attracts around 12 children ranging from 2 to 16 years old. In recent years, some of the children have been confirmed at combined services in the Deanery and their spiritual development is encouraged and supported by members of the congregation.



*Fun at Sunday School*

*Bishop Sarah with members of the church recently confirmed*



# *St Michael and All Angels Church*

## *Welshampton -*



### **Introduction**

Welshampton is the northern part of the civil parish of Welshampton and Lyneal in the north of Shropshire, near to the town of Ellesmere. There are nearly 200 households in the parish and in recent years a number of new larger properties have been built in the village centre.

The village retains a sense of community spirit, with the Parish Hall completed in 1993. There are not many days when the hall is not being used, from the annual pantomime, ceilidhs to bingo nights.

### **Church**

The church building was designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott and is a characteristic piece of High Victorian design. The nave and chancel terminate in a rounded apse and at the time of consecration the newspaper reporters described St Michael and All Angels as “one of the prettiest specimens of ecclesiastical architecture of which this or any country can boast”. The second Sunday of the month is a relaxed Family Service at 10.30 the other Sundays of the month are Holy Communion, at 11.15.



### **Family Service**



All ages join in at the family service

Tom made his crown to remember the three kings



Even John and Glo the Churchwardens join in at the Family Service



*Bug-ingham Palace*

**The Lych Gate** was renovated last year and a new notice board was erected recently

In the Diocesan Churchyard Competition the award was Gold.



*The Lych Gate*

*The Memorial Garden*

The Memorial Garden was made in anticipation of the Garden of Remembrance becoming full. The seat has a lovely view across the fields and is often used by those wanting a quiet time of reflection.







*The Garden of Remembrance*



*The Wild Flower area unfortunately in winter*

### **Links with Lesotho**

The church and the village have a unique link with the West African country of Lesotho as Prince Jeremiah of Lesotho was buried in our churchyard in 1863, the same year as our church was consecrated. We received a visit from Queen Masenate Mohato Seeiso of Lesotho in 2010. In the past year groups of students from St Saviour's School, Lesotho have visited the church, and a service in his mother-tongue was held at the graveside. Of course, this has not happened since the Pandemic lock down but it is hoped to revive this in the future.



This year 2023 we celebrate 160 years since our church was consecrated and various events are being planned.

# Our Schools

## Cockshutt Church of England Primary School & Nursery

Built in 1857, the school currently has 64 children on roll, and offer a breakfast and afterschool club. The school has consistently been assessed as good by OFSTED and SIAMS inspections.

Mrs Jones is the Executive Head Teacher of Cockshutt and Criftins schools. The partnership between the school and Church is crucial for pupils to understand the school ethos and its place within the Diocese of Lichfield and its Church of England Heritage. It is a happy vibrant school with strong core values and a passion for every child to understand who they are and the contribution they can make to the world.

The school has had a strong relationship with each member of the clergy over the years and they have made an impact on our school through Collective Worship, Church Services, Journey Days and as part of the Governing Body of our Federation. The children want a minister who is fun, happy to answer questions, will enjoy Journey Days with us and will visit our school regularly so we can see faith in action.



## Welshampton Church of England Primary School

“We are proud to be a Church of England School with the vision ‘Let Your Light Shine’ as stated in Matthew 5:16 Sermon on the Mount.

This translates into our children being nurtured as unique individuals with skills and talents which we seek to identify and promote through activities both within the school and beyond.” (From the school’s website at [www.welshamptonceprimary.co.uk](http://www.welshamptonceprimary.co.uk))

Welshampton’s Voluntary Controlled Primary School is federated with Newton Primary School to become Newhampton C.E. Schools Federation.

The 72 children are taught in three small classes. The school and church have strong well-established links with the previous vicar and church volunteers going into school. The school celebrates the main Christian festivals in church, including Christmas, Easter and Harvest as well as services for Remembrance and Mothering Sunday.

The school is complemented by the Welshampton pre-school playgroup, called Caterpillars held in the pre-school unit adjacent to the school and caters for children from the age of 2.



# Our Communities

## **W.I (Women's Institute)**

There are two active branches of the W.I in Lyneal cum Colemere and Cockshutt.

## **Community Activities**

Occasional concerts are arranged in the churches and are generally well attended bringing together people from the church and the surrounding area. Other events held across the Benefices throughout the year are well supported. Plants sales, summer garden parties, parish lunches, film shows, open gardens, fancy dress (optional) themed quiz nights are some of the events organised and held each year. Since returning after the Pandemic some of these activities have not picked up and need reviewing.

## **Social Organisations and Facilities**

We have two amateur dramatics societies in the Benefice, a craft group, regular exercise and dance classes, a walking group, community café, lunch club, and a horticultural show. There are two public houses serving food and drink and hosting quizzes, live music and other events.

We have two well-equipped village halls which are used for a wide variety of activities, events and private parties. We also have Lyneal Activity Centre, owned by Shropshire Guiding (the old school) which is regularly used by the church and local community events.

## **The Lyneal Trust**

The Lyneal Trust is a registered charity based at Lyneal Wharf which provides canal and canal side holidays for people with disabilities and vulnerabilities - either visible or invisible. Three purpose-built narrow boats together with canal side chalets are available for hire for people with disabilities and their Carers. The Trust is run by a group of volunteers who mostly come from the local area and have good connections with the church.

# Pattern of Services

The pattern of Sunday services is being maintained during the vacancy:

## *1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the Month*

9.30 Holy Communion Petton  
10.00am Holy Communion Colemere  
11.15am Holy Communion Welshampton

## *2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the Month*

10am Sunday School\* Colemere  
10.30am Holy Communion Cockshutt  
10.30 Family Service Welshampton

## *3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the Month*

10.00am Holy Communion Colemere  
11.15am Holy Communion Welshampton  
3.00 Messy Church\* Cockshutt

## *4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the Month*

10am Family Service\* Colemere  
10.30am Holy Communion Cockshutt  
6.30 Evensong Welshampton  
(during the summer)

## *5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the Month*

Joint Benefice Holy Communion (on a rolling rota between parishes)

Occasional Offices please see Parish Statistics

The services are being maintained during the vacancy thanks to a number of retired clergy living in the Deanery

Services marked with \* are lay lead.

## Parish Statistics

	Cockshutt	Colemere	Petton	Welshampton
<b>Number of persons on Electoral Roll</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>Number of Baptisms last year</b>				
<b>Baptisms</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Weddings Last year</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Funerals Last year</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Congregation on average</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Parish Population</b>	<b>678</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>650</b>

# The Rectory

The Rectory for the Benefice is situated in Cockshutt a short walk from the church of St Simon and St Jude. Accessed down a drive it is in a secluded and quiet setting away from the main Shrewsbury road.



*Front entrance and drive*

There are four bedrooms (three double size) an upstairs bathroom and separate toilet.



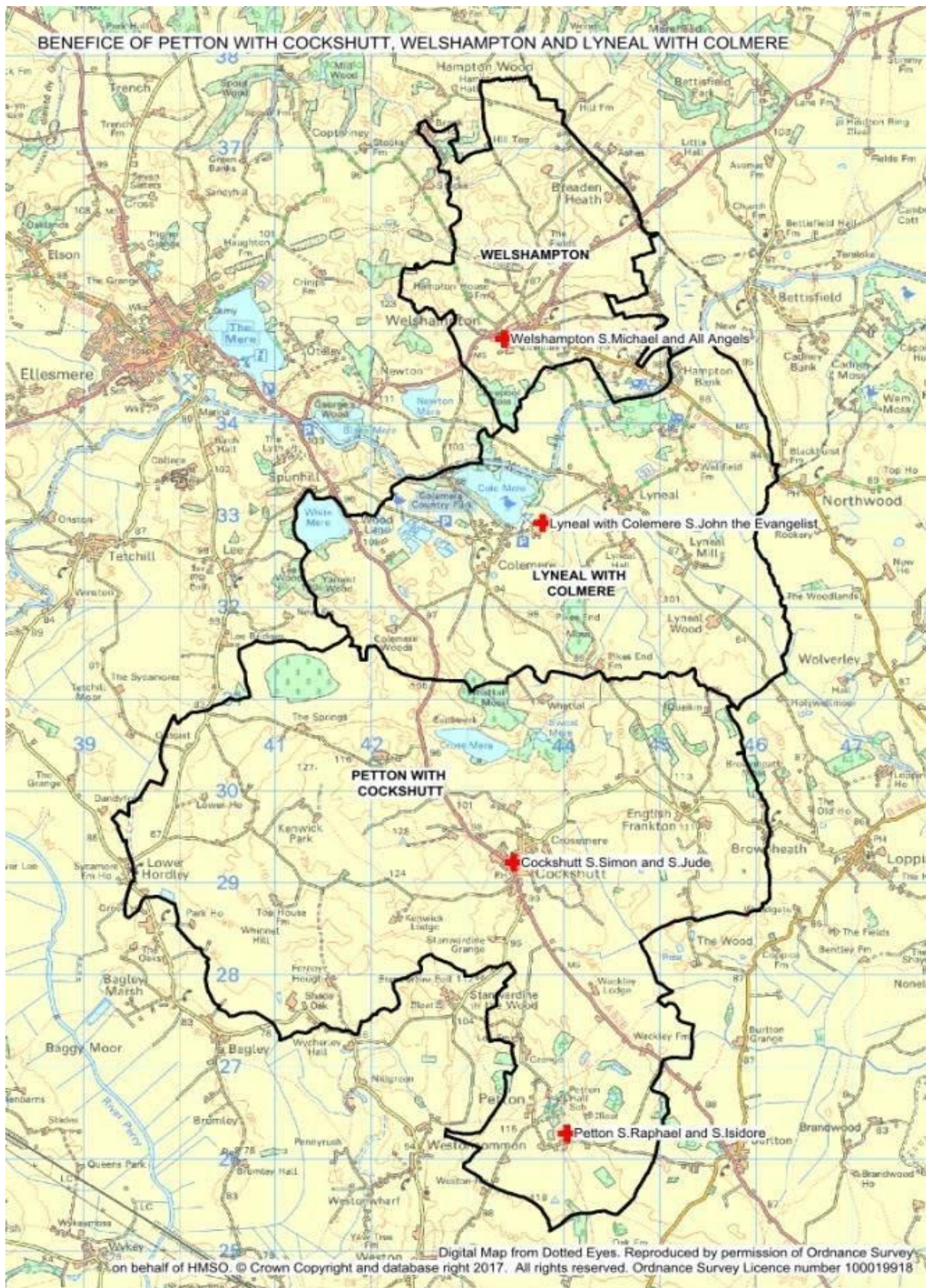
A large lounge with open fireplace has French Doors leading to the lawned garden.

There is a separate dining room adjacent to a large kitchen and utility room and there is oil-fired central heating.



There is a study just inside the front door, a downstairs cloakroom and toilet.

There is a garage attached to the house.





Welshampton and Colmere are in the same civil parish but separate ecclesiastical parishes.

