Our Benefice Community
growing together,
looking outwards,
serving others.

St. Edward The Confessor
Cheddleton

St. Michael and All Angels
Horton

St. Chad
Longsdon

St. Lawrence
Rushton Spencer

DIocese OF LICHFIELD
Come follow Christ
in the footsteps of St Chad
AN INVITATION FROM US TO YOU

Come and join us in the beautiful Staffordshire Moorlands.

We are a United Benefice of four rural parishes.

Our four churches, each with its own unique history and distinctive character, are St Edward the Confessor, situated in Cheddleton, St Michael and all Angels, Horton, St Chad, Longsdon and St Lawrence at Rushton Spencer. Whilst the whole benefice is rural, Cheddleton is a large village and much the biggest community within the benefice. The vicarage is sited at Cheddleton.

More about each individual parish is included later in the profile.
Where are we now?

**Our Strengths**

- Seeking to find out what God wants
- Community based
- Energised by Faith
- Inclusive and focused
- Outward looking focus

**Our Challenges**

- Develop lively and active interface with local schools
- Encouraging outreach into the Community
- Securing finances
- Fostering relationships

**Could this be You?**
ROLE DESCRIPTION

We are four parishes learning to grow together. We each have our strengths and our weaknesses, our hopes and aspirations.

We would love to welcome a full-time vicar; someone who:

- has a real heart for the Gospel and rural ministry, is a good communicator and is eager to deepen our discipleship and our relationship with Christ.
- is a good listener and who has a concern for all the people of the benefice, with pastoral care being an important element of their work.
- is able to help us build on our contacts with young families and our benefice schools.
- will lead manage and inspire our committed volunteers.
- Someone who is flexible in styles of worship; willing to honour some of our musical traditions but helping us to develop new styles of worship.
- is able to work ecumenically
- is seen to be active and visible, helping us as churches to engage more fully within the community.
- will work alongside the ministry team in delivering services and occasional offices throughout the benefice – (it will be necessary for the applicant to hold a current driving license and have access to a vehicle).

The background “post-its” represent part of the process for developing our Role Description.
WE WILL SUPPORT YOU IN EVERY WAY WE CAN:

We are a benefice with an active leadership team. Readers participate on a rota basis to meet ministerial requirements. There are a number of retired clergy residing within the benefice and willing to help with occasional services.

We will respect your days off, holiday entitlement and time for on-going professional development.

We will reimburse expenses incurred in the execution of the job.

The benefice PCC’s will offer every help and support they can but will look to the vicar as their leader: someone who enables, facilitates and encourages.

Our leadership team consists of:

1 retired priest with PTO (female)
1 licensed Reader (male)
1 retired Reader with PTO (male)
1 authorised lay Community Minister (female)
Every-member ministry
Within the benefice churches there are a large number of people who exercise ministry in the following ways....

- **Worship** – intercessors, scripture readers, servers, welcomers, Eucharistic ministers, Lay Led Services.

- **Preaching** – Readers and those who speak occasionally at informal services (congregation led or invited speakers)

- **Pastoral** – pastoral care and bereavement care carried out across the benefice (visit sick, bereaved etc). In Cheddleton there is a dedicated bereavement/pastoral team.

- **Learning** – There is an active, ecumenically run Bible Study Group in Cheddleton and seasonal courses run in the benefice. Through preaching, study groups, courses (Confirmation) people reflect on the interface between faith and life, and ministry in secular employment.

- **Service** – there are regular activities across the benefice including weekly lunch/friendship club, coffee mornings, support for local food banks and women’s refuge.

- **Mission** - active Mothers’ Unions, with member involvement at branch, deanery, diocesan and central level. The current diocesan President is from our benefice.
  - St. Edward’s men’s society run in Cheddleton for the benefice.
  - Ecumenical Prayer Chain
  - Lay led regular services of Home Communion in the local residential/nursing Home and for the housebound.
  - Regular school services held across the benefice in our churches and assemblies held at all church schools. Representation on school governors
  - Planned church open days and special events

We have now been a united benefice for 7 years and we are developing a tradition of working and holding social events together throughout the parishes.
PATTERNS OF WORSHIP

Our worship across the benefice varies from BCP to less formal Family Worship.

SUNDAY SERVICES

**Cheddleton, St Edward’s has 3 services each Sunday:**

8.00a.m. Holy Communion or Morning Prayer (alternating)

10.00a.m. Holy Communion or Family Service (alternating).

Baptisms are held monthly during the morning service if required.

6.30 Sung Eucharist or Evensong (alternating). There is a full choir at every evening service. The choir is experienced and willing to lead evensong when required to do so.

**Horton, Longsdon and Rushton Spencer have 1 service per Sunday:**

Horton and Rushton Spencer:

11.30 Holy Communion or Morning Praise (alternating)

**Longsdon:**

9.30 Holy Communion or Morning Praise (alternating)

When there is a 5th Sunday in the month we have a United Service of Holy Communion at each of the churches in turn.

WEEKDAY SERVICES:

Cheddleton only:

Thursday 10.00a.m. Holy Communion (weekly)

Friday 5.00p.m. Community Prayer (monthly)

There is an active and growing team of Bell-ringers who ring for Sunday morning services at Cheddleton and Horton

We have four regular organists within the benefice and there is rarely a service that does not have organist accompaniment (Sunday 8.00a.m. service not included).
A snapshot of Benefice life

Baptisms
Bell ringer
Benefice Magazine
Bible Study Group
Choir
Church Flowers
Carol services
Charity Choir Events
Christmas Tree Festival
Coffee Mornings
Concerts
Confirmation
Curry & Casserole nights
Floral Decoration Team
Food Bank
Friendship Club
Harvest Festival
Live Nativity
Teddy Bear Parachute
Memorial Services
Messy Church
Mothers’ Union
Open Gardens
Pet Services
Pie and Pea Suppers
Community Quiz
Remembrance Sunday
Blessing Services
School worship
School Festivals
Weddings
Wedding Fayre
Well Dressing
U3A Visits
THE BENEFICE LOCATION

All four parishes within the benefice are close to the bustling market town of Leek which has a good variety of independent retailers as well as supermarkets, a swimming pool and sports centre, library and arts centre and community hospital with minor injuries department. Good rail links are available at Stoke, Macclesfield and Buxton all less than 15 miles away. The University Hospital of Stoke is a recognised major trauma centre and Macclesfield also has a large general hospital.

The area currently has an excellent Middle School education system with three of the parishes having CoE (A) or (C) First schools. Pupils travel into Leek to access Middle Schools, High Schools and tertiary education.

The Staffordshire Moorlands, on the borders of the Peak District, is increasingly developing its tourism status and nearby attractions include Alton Towers as well as steam railways, Rudyard Lake, several sailing clubs, rock climbing at the Roaches, canal and cycle routes and many more opportunities for outdoor activities.

Our benefice supports Leek and District and Cheadle Foodbanks and, on occasions, supports Churches Together in Leek and District for special events such as the annual Club Day walk and service of witness in the market place.

We live in a beautiful part of the country and are thankful for all that we have but we believe that God is calling us to not only treasure our traditions but also to be church in new and diverse ways. We have a desire to engage with and serve our benefice communities, and the wider area, more effectively; sharing the gospel and actively demonstrating the love of Christ in this place.
A wonderful place to be.............

Set in the beautiful Staffordshire Moorlands

Leek and the Staffordshire Moorlands

Beautiful Dovedale

Cheddleton Flint Mill

Churnet Valley Railway

Rudyard Lake
CHEDDLETON ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH

Cheddleton is a large semi-rural village situated in the Staffordshire Moorlands overlooking the Churnet valley, three miles south of the market town of Leek and on a public transport route between Leek and the Potteries, Buxton, Macclesfield and Derby.

The ecclesiastical parish of Cheddleton* is an area of 7.5 square miles. It has a population of approximately 5000 with 2,015 occupied households. Approximately 21% of the population is aged 0-18 and 19% over 65. The population is approximately 99% white ethnicity and 71% Christian.

There have been a number of major property developments over the last decade with the majority of housing in Cheddleton being owner occupied.

There is a small industrial estate – home to approximately 20 businesses. Traditionally a farming area, many of the working population now commute to Leek, the Potteries or Manchester.

The village has an excellent CoE(C) Primary Academy with approximately 200 pupils. It is OFSTED rated GOOD, SIAMS EXCELLENT

There are two food stores (one of which is also a newsagents, the other an off-licence). The village also has a dental practice, veterinary practice, hairdresser/nail bar, restaurant, three public houses and a fish and chip shop.

Tourist attractions include the Caldon Canal and Flint Mill (recently featured on TV and the Churnet Valley (a Site of Special Scientific Interest).

There is the Pugin designed Cheddleton Station and the Churnet Valley steam railway.
The old Victorian school houses a Tea Room – and the Church with its connections to the Arts and Crafts movement, William Morris and Leek Embroiderers, is in itself a tourist attraction.

Though Cheddleton is a large and expanding village, it retains a strong sense of community and generates an excellent range of activities inclusive of both young and not so young. There are in excess of 30 different activity/interest groups.

The village has an excellent community centre (formerly a school) as well as good facilities at St Andrew’s Methodist Church and our own St Edward’s Centre for smaller gatherings.

Cheddleton is proud to be associated with Lee Pearson CBE – horse riding champion and holder of 11X Paralympic Games Gold medals.

*Data on ecclesiastical parish of Cheddleton supplied by Lichfield Diocese, August 2019*
The vicarage, sited at Cheddleton, was built in 1954. It is set in its own extensive but easily maintained gardens with splendid views. It is adjacent to a glebe field and a visual open space which will preserve its pleasant aspect.

The detached residence has four bedrooms (1 en suite), bathroom, three reception rooms, a downstairs cloakroom, entrance hall and fitted kitchen. The house has double glazing, gas fired central heating and a burglar alarm system. There are two garages and further parking space for several cars.

Refurbishment and internal upgrading is currently being undertaken.
ST EDWARD THE CONFESSOR, CHEDDLETON

Mission Statement: Sharing the love of God with all people

History of the Church
The present church was founded in the 12th century, but there is a suggestion that this was preceded by a wooden church. It is thought to have been one of a number of chapels of ease on a pilgrim route between Dieulacresse Abbey and Hulton Abbey.
The 12th century North aisle is the oldest part of the church with the South aisle being added in the 13th/14th century.

Over the intervening centuries a number of additions, alterations and refurbishments have been carried out.
Renovation in the 19th century arose as a consequence of neglect by previous incumbents and resulted in large scale works including the removal of the stone rood loft and its replacement by the existing oak screen and the installation of a number of stained glass windows, the most famous being by Burne Jones. Much of this work was undertaken by William Morris and his colleagues because of his association with Thomas Wardle, who was Churchwarden at the time. Many of the precious artefacts in the church were acquired at the same time.

The sanctuary refurbishment of the 1960s included panelling and an altar rail by Thomsons of Kilburn, with the famous mouse trademark. During this refurbishment, two lead coffins, containing the remains of monks, were discovered buried underneath the altar.
The church is recognised in tourist information as an important historical and cultural site in the Staffordshire Moorlands.
Standing adjacent to the church is the ‘choir house’- a listed building which, in 2017, underwent a complete renovation. This building now offers toilet facilities which comply with disabled requirements, 2 x meeting rooms, office space, kitchen facilities on both floors and storage space. The choir house (now known as St Edward’s Centre) has facilitated many church outreach events in addition to improving the comfort and ambience for our church congregation.

St Edward’s Church has an active and dedicated choir which supports Sunday evening services and special services. They can be available for weddings and some funerals.

St Edward’s Church has a closed graveyard adjacent to the church and a memorial garden all of which are maintained by the Council. Burials now take place at Cheddleton Lawn Cemetery.
St Michael’s Church Horton

History:
The church building holds a rich history dating back to the 17th century with alterations in the 19th century. The Church has a square tower supporting six bells. There is a very early stone altar which was buried at the time of the Reformation but was rediscovered and put back in its rightful place. The picturesque churchyard is home to several yew trees one of which is 1200 years old. There are numerous old gravestones some dating back to the 1700s and include a memorial to local poet George Heath. The old churchyard is accessed via a Lych Gate which was built in 1902. A later graveyard lies across the lane in which is located a war memorial dedicated to the men of the parish killed during the first and second world wars.

Church building changes:
The organ was installed at the end of the 20th Century and is a two-manual instrument by ‘Jardine’. It is in excellent condition having been regularly maintained.
Quinquennial maintenance work is ongoing with the urgent work having been completed minor jobs are ongoing. The church is heated by an oil-fired boiler and radiators operated by a time switch. The laying on of mains water is partially completed but not yet in the building. It is proposed this be completed by 2020 along with repairs to the lead roof.

Activities and the Congregation:
Our fortnightly Communion Service and alternating Morning Praise service typically has 10 to 15 worshippers. This expands to over 50 at Harvest and Christmas. Being a rural farming community, our Harvest services are popular with the following Harvest Supper being a well-supported local tradition. Weddings, baptisms and funerals can see every pew taken.
We have a dedicated qualified organist who never misses, along with 6 bell ringers. We are well supported by the community; an almost extended congregation, who never fail to support the Church at fund raising events and in giving practical help. Horton has a beautiful local village hall which is not run by the church, but is where most of our social and fund-raising events are held along with funeral wakes etc.

Horton Parish
Horton parish consists of the village of Rudyard and the hamlets of Horton and Gratton. The area is predominantly a farming community although Rudyard is a more residential village. Rudyard Lake is a local beauty spot well known for its connection with Rudyard Kipling. Rudyard has several local groups including a thriving and thriving WI and a Toddler group. There is an active Methodist church in Rudyard with which joint activities may be arranged.

The local C of E Junior School – Horton St Michael’s First School, currently has 65 pupils and has excellent contacts with the Church. The children take part in an annual carol concert service at Church and regularly invite the congregation to school events. In addition, a PCC member acts as a Governor at the school and the Headteacher is keen to continue this mutual support. There is also a school for children with special educational needs at Horton Lodge.

The Mission Action Plan is complete and up to date and the church has financial reserves.
ST. CHAD’S CHURCH, LONGSDON, STOKE ON TRENT.

History:
St. Chad’s church was built between 1903 and 1905 and has a Grade II* listing. The person responsible for providing the finance was John Robinson of Westwood Hall, Leek and it was his wish to purchase a 3 acre farm at Longsdon in 1899 on which to build a church, vicarage with a churchroom attached and churchyard. Unfortunately, he died in 1902 before any building had started but, his three sons carried out his wishes and the church was completed and consecrated in 1905. When the whole complex was conveyed to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in 1905, it was described at the time as “the most complete gift the Diocese of Lichfield has ever known”.

The person given the responsibility of designing and planning the whole project was the architect Gerald Horsley. It was built in the Arts and Crafts style mainly of local sandstone and its large size is rather unusual compared to the smallness of the parish it represents. It was designed to seat over 320 when records show the population of the parish was only 534. Even in the initial years after its consecration the attendance struggled to reach 50 and today with a parish population of around 1500 the average Sunday attendance is 20.

Church Building changes:
Externally the church has changed little over the last 115 years and most of the changes have been maintenance led; electricity replaced oil for lighting, heating oil replaced coke and rising warm air was replaced by water radiators. In fact the biggest changes remain very much unseen.

Internally, within a few years of the church’s completion in 1905, a Jardine organ was installed. Little changed inside the church until 1997 when the pews in the north aisle were removed creating open space.

The vicarage and attached church room were sold in 2017. Due to the sale the north aisle area was changed to a carpeted hospitality area, which includes a dedicated area for Children’s activities, and the choir vestry was fitted out as a kitchen. We also have an internal toilet as well as two externally.
The whole of the north facing church roof and vestry roof were replaced during 2017 along with new guttering and downspouts. We were successfully able to gain a grant for this work.

At the beginning of 2019 part of the church lawn was converted to a hard surface area along with the remainder of the church lawn being used for parking when needed.

Most recently a new water treatment plant serving the church and Old Vicarage has been installed (2019).

Proposed further improvements include south side roofing work potentially planned for 2022 (this will require significant fundraising and hopefully grant assistance).

There are no financial reserves at Longsdon church.

Activities and the congregation
Our church has an active PCC with a Secretary, Treasurer, Churchwarden, Support Church Warden, and a Safe Guarding officer. There are 7 other dedicated members. We also have a representative who attends the Deanery Synod meetings. We meet as and when needed and our meetings are friendly, cooperative and productive.

We also have an active fundraising/social activity team, again, this group is friendly, positive and effective, not to mention very hardworking. Most months there is a fundraising activity organised. There is also a dedicated and committed Mothers’ Union which meets monthly, mainly with a guest speaker.

We regularly have around 18-25 people attending our Sunday service. We have young families with children attending along with long standing members of the church. We are a warm and good-natured congregation who welcome new comers.
Services:
Sunday Service is at 9.30am with Holy Communion on alternate Sundays.

Baptisms are carried out during the Sunday Service. Weddings and funerals by arrangement. The church is currently kept locked unless in use.

*U3A visit to Longsdon Church*

The Ashes and Dunwood Hall are two of the best wedding locations in the north and both are located nearby. St Chad’s attracts a good number of weddings and has even held its own ‘wedding fayre’ which involved a number of local businesses.
In addition to the wedding venues, Longsdon boasts two Country Parks, two anals, two pubs; both serving food, the Churnet Valley river runs through the village and there is a village memorial hall where a number of village activities take place eg badminton, salsa, tai-chi, Longsdon Ladies and Garden Guild Society. There is a local newsagent and an active Parish Council.
History:

St Lawrence church is believed to have been built in 1203 by the monks of Dieulacres Abbey, Leek.

The best preserved and one of the oldest gravestones in the church yard is dated 1610. This grave was originally within the church until 1898, when the flooring was replaced it was moved and now it is to be found laid in the path by the porch.

Our church is currently grade 2 listed.

There are many notable historical items and artefacts within the church which attract visitors, even a hidden vault, now inaccessible, discovered in 1956.

Church Building changes:

Naturally there have been some additions and alterations over the past 700 years. Within the last 20 years there have been upgrades to the heating, the wood block paving has been renewed, and the stone roofing on the south side removed and replaced. Our most recent activity is more roofing work which is due to take place later this year.
Activities and the congregation:

Our congregation mainly consists of active seniors, with some family attendance. The average number is around 12-16 people attending Sunday’s services. There are increased numbers at services at Christmas, Easter and Harvest.

We have an open graveyard.

We have established links within the community and the local C of E primary school. Rushton is in regular contact with the church, our retired reader (with PTO) and a PCC member acting as Governors. The children take part in annual carol and harvest festival services.

We hold a yearly pea and pie supper which is very well attended; alongside this we also hold a fully licensed lottery. The two activities provide funds for our church. The church has financial reserves.

We have a PCC, which meets as and when needed. The members are proactive and positive. Although we have a ‘senior’ congregation, we would embrace a more flexible approach to attract young families in the community via our school connections.

Rushton Spencer is a very rural area but maintains a good sense of community. Many classes for the community are held at nearby Swythamley & Heaton Centre. There is a local choir, gardening club, book and film clubs and historical society as well as two active women’s institutes and fellowship meetings at the Methodist school house. There are two pubs, one of which is community run. This area is popular with walkers and there are many public footpaths, one of which passes close by St Lawrence’s church.
The Statistics!

2019 statistics

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<th>Horton</th>
<th>Longsdon</th>
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Digital Map from Dotted Eyes
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The Benefice Of Cheddleton, Horton, Longsdon and Rushton Spencer

Thank you for reading this Profile and reflecting on the possibility of applying for this exciting post.

If you have a heart for rural ministry but are also looking for supportive congregations who are outward looking and keen to engage with their Communities, then this may well be the right post for you.

As a Diocese we are travelling in a clear direction with the commitment to develop discipleship, encourage vocation and inspire evangelism.

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 partners with others in seeking the common good, working for justice as a people of hope.

If you do apply for this post and are successful you will be supported at both Area and Diocesan level by an enthusiastic and experienced Team. We want you to enjoy your ministry – for then everyone else will too!

Please be assured of my prayers during your process of discernment.

+Geoff