



**The Church of England**  
around Staffordshire, northern  
Shropshire and the Black Country



## Curacy in the Diocese of Lichfield

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**Title post in the  
parish of  
Holy Cross,  
Shrewsbury**



### Shrewsbury Abbey

Middle Churchmanship, Choral  
Tradition: civic church for Shropshire

### St Peter's Monkmoor

Middle Churchmanship, Informal  
Worship: serving an area of significant  
social need

# Welcome to Lichfield Diocese



**Come follow Christ**  
in the footsteps of St Chad

Cradled at the intersection of the Midlands and the North, and the interface between England and Wales, the Diocese of Lichfield is the ancient centre of Christianity in what was the Kingdom of Mercia.

We are rightfully grateful for the inheritance we have from St Chad that leads us to focus on Discipleship, Vocation and Evangelism as we live and serve among the communities of Staffordshire, northern Shropshire and the Black Country.

Wherever in the Diocese you may be placed, you will benefit from being part of a wider family, mixing with people serving in a wide variety of contexts – from the grittiest inner-city neighbourhoods of Stoke and the Black Country, to the leafiest rural parishes of Staffordshire and

Shropshire, to the sparsest upland communities of the Staffordshire Moorlands and Welsh Borders.

And we embrace the widest spectrum of church traditions – evangelical and catholic, liberal and conservative, choral and charismatic, as we journey together – as a colleague recently put it, it is our goal to be a ‘spacious and gracious diocese’.

**‘...a spacious and gracious diocese.’**

It is my determination and that of my fellow-bishops that your calling to a title post will be a time of encouragement, ongoing formation, challenge and (while rarely unbridled) joy. Our colleagues among the Diocesan staff keenly bring their various specialisms both spiritual and practical to serve our parishes, fresh expressions, schools and chaplaincies.

**+ Rt Revd Dr Michael Igrave**  
Bishop of Lichfield

**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 a people of hope. (Diocesan Vision Statement)**

## A caring diocese

Lichfield Diocese is one of the largest in the country, covering an area of 1744 square miles and serving a population of more than 2 million.

The Diocese consists of three episcopal areas with three Area Bishops (of Wolverhampton, Stafford and Shrewsbury) ministering alongside the Diocesan Bishop, each overseeing a different geographic area. This indicates the Diocese's commitment to its different contexts, and to the pastoral care of our clergy.

## Homes and schools

We aim to provide high quality housing for our clergy with a continuous programme of improvements to houses and responsive, specialist contractors for emergencies.

As well as the 208 Church of England schools in the Diocese, there are many good schools and colleges that will welcome clergy' children, and a number of

higher education centres can be found in Stoke, Keele, Stafford, Shrewsbury, Telford, Wolverhampton and Walsall.

## Vocation and mission of all

Our vision for the Diocese is that all people, lay and ordained alike, will grow ever more deeply into their vocation as disciples of Christ. We hope to become a Church where all our members are equipped to know they are called by God to

worship and to be the eyes, hands, feet and mouth of Christ in their own contexts.

To further these aims, and to develop creative patterns of ministry, we ask all training parishes to offer 'sixth-day' opportunities for curates – which might be a chaplaincy attachment (school, hospital, prison or

hospice), involvement with local gardening ventures, night-shelter involvement – to mention just a few possibilities.



"Our time as a family in my curacy in rural Shropshire has been one of the best of our lives. I've learned that the priestly role is vital in the community. I'm particularly enjoying working with seniors, and enabling the giftings of others which resulted in a successful Messy Church starting in one of the villages. I give thanks to God for this special time, and for everyone who's been there for me and supported me throughout."

Revd Jassica Castillo-Burley

### The Archdeaconries of Lichfield Diocese





# Everything but the sea



David Rayner (Wikipedia) / Stoke-on-Trent Bottle Kiln / [CC BY-SA 2.0](#)

Staffordshire prides itself on being 'the Creative County': Shropshire is the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution and the Black Country is renowned for its industry and all have significant opportunities for spouses who wish to develop careers in any sphere.

For those days off when you need space away from the parish, the area has everything you could wish for – except the sea: wild landscapes, cultured museums and stately homes. Sports of many kinds (including Premiership football) and at least two theme parks

Shrewsbury Flax Mill – the prototype skyscraper / Tk420 (Wikipedia) / [CC BY-SA 4.0](#)



Opening of the Lighthouse Project at Kingsland CE Academy, Bucknall



## Road and rail links



For those with family and friends in other parts of the country, the Diocese has great transport links: the M6/M6Toll bisects the centre of the Diocese north-south, and the M5 originates at our southern tip. Heading west, the A5/M54 give easy access to north and mid Wales, while the A50, A5 and M6Toll give swift access to the M1, M42 and A38 for the East Midlands and the south-east.

Rail links are also good with all major towns having direct services to London and Birmingham and four major airports surround our borders – Birmingham, East Midlands, Manchester and Liverpool.



*Dovedale (location of one of the Diocese's two residential retreat centres) / Shaun Dunmall (wikipedia) / CC BY-SA 2.0*

## Leisure and pleasure

Lichfield Diocese has everything but the sea. For walkers and climbers, there's an extensive network of canals, Cannock Chase, The Roaches, and the Shropshire—Welsh borders (for example). If you're into more organised fun, Alton Towers and Drayton Manor Theme Park can provide it. And then there's

*Wightwick Manor nr Wolverhampton / Tony Hisgett (Wikipedia) / CC BY-SA 4.0*



many museums including Walsall's New Art Gallery and the RAF museum at Cosford; not to mention excellent sporting options for both watching and participating – from premiership football to the Tamworth Snowdome. Along with Wedgwood, theatres and cinemas, restaurants and superb tea shops just begging to be discovered...



*Apedale Valley Light Railway nr Stoke is one of many transport and leisure museums in the Diocese / Simon Jones*

If shopping is your thing, there is a range of options, from the chic boutiques at Barton Marina, and Shrewsbury to large malls in or near the urban centres. We're fortunate in being the home of many fine ales and beers brewed in Burton on Trent (the museum is well worth a visit), and Staffordshire oatcakes are a unique local delicacy to be discovered.



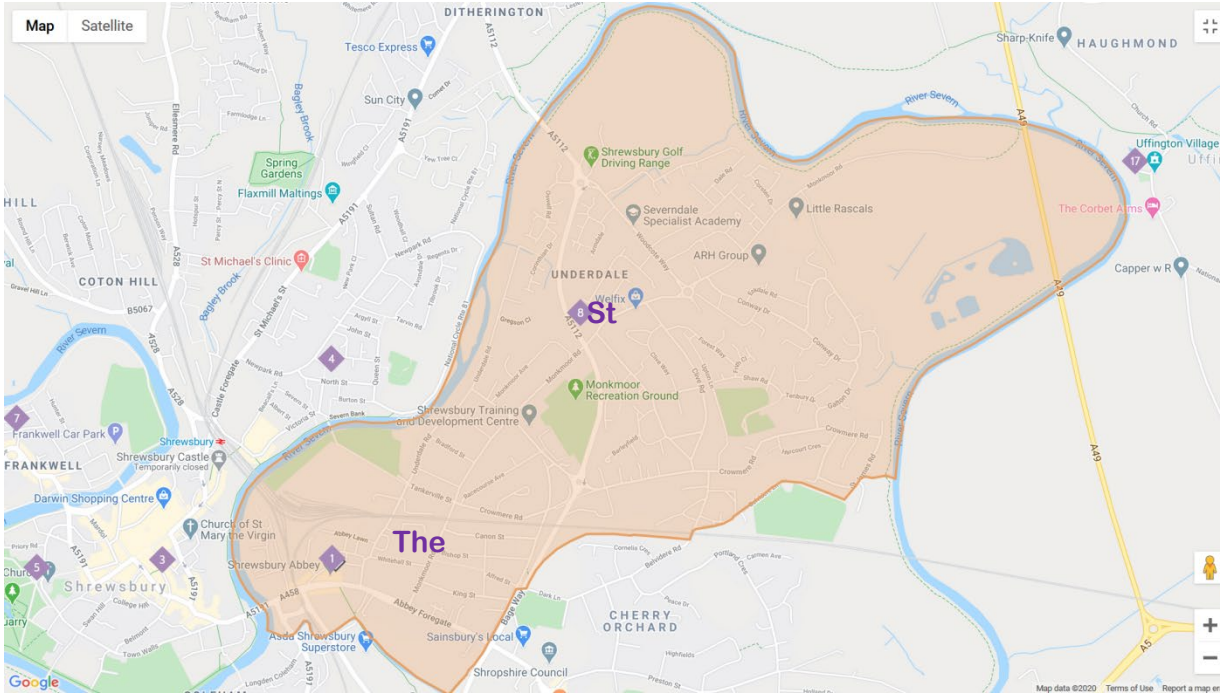
*Wulfrun Centre in Wolverhampton is one of many shopping destinations in the region © Roger Kidd -/ [geograph.org.uk/p/1171894/](http://geograph.org.uk/p/1171894/) CC BY 2.0*

*Alton Towers near Uttoxeter Jeremy Thompson/Flickr / CC BY 2.0*





# The Benefice of Holy Cross



- Holy Cross parish spreads north-eastwards from the bank of the Severn, with Shrewsbury town centre opposite on the westwards bank.
- The most southerly point of this urban parish of 10,000+ residents has the first of the two churches in the parish, Shrewsbury Abbey, a member of the Major Churches Network, and tourist destination for over 30,000, which is a relatively affluent, white, very elderly congregation in an area matching it.

- The rest of the parish becomes increasingly more economically deprived as it runs north-eastwards, and encompasses several 1960's housing estates with highly significant pockets of deprivation, including families of asylum seekers, and the highest level of pensioner poverty in the county. The second church in the parish, St Peter's sits in the middle of this part of the parish.
- Cycling is as easy as driving here, and the parish is within easy walking distance of good rail links to Lichfield, Birmingham, Manchester and beyond.
- We have easily navigable geography despite a relatively large parish population.
- The Abbey is the setting for the world-famous 'Cadfael' murder mysteries, and held the shrine of local saint, Winefride, until the reformation. The Guild of St Winefride is a growing international community of prayer based at the Abbey.
- We have one PCC for the parish.

## Services in the churches

The Abbey has a choral tradition and most Sundays makes use of an excellent robed choir at 10:45 am Eucharist and 3pm Evensong.

The Abbey also hosts county wide services with the Lord Lieutenant of Shropshire and other civic groups on a regular basis.

The Abbey has a world-class William Hill 1911 organ which is currently in the process of major refurbishment and restoration.

There is morning prayer daily at 8:30am with the Guild of St Winfride and a midday Eucharist on Thursdays.

St Peter's has a more relaxed Eucharistic or Lay led service at 9:30am on Sundays.

### Sundays in The Abbey

	8.30 am Morning Prayer 10.45 am Choral Eucharist 3.00 pm Choral Evensong
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### Sundays at St Peter's

1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> 4 <sup>th</sup>	9:30 am Eucharist
3 <sup>rd</sup>	9:30 am Morning Prayer
5 <sup>th</sup>	10.30 am All-ability service with service users from town-wide disability groups

# The Benefice of Holy Cross



## St Peter's Church & Parish Hall

St Peter's church is a warm, welcoming and comfortable 1930's mission church. The modern parish hall dates from the 1990's and is next to the church on site. It has kitchen facilities and hosts weekly coffee and chat for the community and a monthly weekday service and tea for people living with dementia and their carers. It also hosts a weekly knitting group, a mother and toddlers group, and a prayer and discipleship group.

## Shrewsbury Abbey

The County Church of Shropshire, The Abbey is a thousand year old Benedictine foundation which was largely destroyed by Henry VIII leaving only the chapel belonging to the town standing, the current parish church. Heavily rebuilt in the Victorian era to mixed results, the church still retains Norman pillars and stone carving, and now has a small kitchen and toilets in the building. It hosts a number of concerts and large events each year.

## Your Training Incumbent

### Revd Dr Tom Atfield

1 Underdale Court, Shrewsbury, SY2 5DD

- Trained: The Queens Foundation
- Ordained: 2011, Diocese of Worcester
- Curacy: St John the Baptist, Bromsgrove
- Vicar: since 2019

Tom is a former special educational needs teacher.



He builds ministry teams and values ministry from across the breadth of churchmanship and theological opinion. He welcomes the ministry of everyone regardless of their sexuality or gender.



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## The Context

Shropshire moves from rolling farmland in the east to dramatic mountainous terrain on the border with Wales. It is geologically and historically interesting, and its topography features on the medieval 'Mapa Mundi' of the known world.

Despite outwards appearances, Shropshire is also one of the top ten deprived regions in Western Europe, comprising mostly of small agricultural settlements with little access to transport links or amenities. Towns and neighbourhoods are frequently highly resilient and cohesive, but also resistant to change.

Shrewsbury, an historic market town near the Welsh border is becoming increasingly diverse through emigration from London, Birmingham and elsewhere, aided in no small part by good transport links and a lively town centre, with more independent shops on its high street than anywhere else in the UK. There is a thriving arts scene, an established LGBT history month and growing networks of alternative ecological and political groups.

Holy Cross Parish straddles the line between Shrewsbury's diverse and affluent town centre and its low-social mobility deprived neighbourhoods.

The latter of which is very noticeable in the schools in the parish. The congregation is drawn from both Salopians (people from Shropshire) and retirees from elsewhere.

Parish history is complex, caused in part by an assumed historical tension between the need to maintain and grow the Abbey in its county-wide role and the need to further the pastoral and missional role of both the Abbey and St Peter's to the parish. There is an urgent challenge to encourage, build up and engage the parish in what God is calling it to do. The green shoots of this are beginning to show. We are forming a comprehensive and energised team comprised of paid staff and volunteers and beginning to find strategic opportunity to outreach both in the parish and beyond.

## The Ministry

We are blessed with a team of Readers and retired clergy, each with much to offer a new colleague and who are all engaged in their own distinct forms of ministry to different groups. Added to this, we have a paid community officer who is engaging with schools, colleges and more at both churches and providing helpful administrative and marketing support. We have growing links with three primary

# The Benefice of Holy Cross

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schools, a secondary school a sixth form college. One morning you could find yourself taking part in a county service for 400 people, including the mayors, MP's, Masons and similar, then in the afternoon helping a local family find the funds to keep their children fed. The current opportunities are diverse.

We are in the process of leading both churches into new missional opportunities, and this will have created new forms of activity and new expressions of church by the time a curate may arrive in 2021. Our parish's motto for 2020 is simply "God is calling us to mission" and we are spending this year identify and planning for new forms of mission and outreach. A curate arriving in 2021 would have



We're really grateful for all the support we got from the Diocese, starting with the DDO, who went out of her way to help in finding a good match, and to work out practical matters.

My vicar has been very supportive, through planning carefully together and weekly supervisions, where we reflect on different areas of ministry. I have been given new challenges progressively, all done sensitively and fitted to the stage I was at. Our churches have been so welcoming to the whole family, and very supportive of my ministry, even when this involves less regular ideas, like planting a tree during a sermon (only in a pot, I regret to say!).

Revd John Beswick Pallister

plenty of opportunity to pick up strands of this and explore further areas for mission, and have the experience of organising people to do the same.

There is great potential for a curate with liturgical and musical interest to input on our growing programme of music and find new outreach opportunities using this. The Abbey also has a long-established "open door" outreach programme to Shropshire schools with sees hundreds of primary school children visiting the abbey each year. In 2020-2021 we are piloting an expansion of this, and there will be ample opportunity for any additional clergy in the parish to help develop this scheme from 2021 onwards.

In addition to these local opportunities, any curate based in the parish will have access to the training and networking opportunities for curates in the Major Churches Network. There is also an Anglican chaplaincy being developed in the nearby Shrewsbury University Campus providing further opportunity and the possibility of later-curacy placement there.

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## Housing and Accommodation

The Diocese of Lichfield either has a curate's house in the benefice or a 'strategic' house for curates in close proximity of the benefice. These are good houses, mainly with four bedrooms. If there is no curate's house in the benefice and where such a strategic property exists within easy reach of the proposed training parish this will be the preferred curate's house. If there is no strategic housing available nearby the diocese is committed to providing appropriate accommodation for all those entering ministry. We generally do not offer rented accommodation except as an emergency short term measure. Our curates can be confident that their home will be of a consistently high standard. If you wish to know further details about the house, the DDO will be able to provide you with more information.



# Curacy in Lichfield Diocese

## Supporting learning and formation

Curate learning, formation and development is strongly valued and affirmed in Lichfield Diocese. Curates receive ongoing supervision and reflection on ministry in the parish, complemented by our curate-training programme in which you share with your year-group of peers. The aim of the training programme is to enable each person to flourish in their ministry and inhabit more deeply their vocation as deacons and priests. This programme supports learning and formation through a partnership between the Diocese and The Queen's Foundation. And it takes place in the context of parish supervision and reflection on ministry.

The programme provides space and an environment beyond the parish context in which curates come together with skilled tutors to learn with and from each other's shared experience, so that they can better integrate their practice and reflection, develop their personal qualities, spiritual, ministerial and professional gifts and skills, and deepen their desire to learn.



*The curacy experience is very much a collective one, often gathering at Lichfield Diocese's centrally-located Shallowford House for study, prayer, retreat and de-stressing with peers: as such, it's a much less scary venue during IME2 than as a base for a BAP!*

## Pattern of training

The programme focuses on grounded and situated learning and prioritises the Diocese's focus on Discipleship, Vocation and Evangelism:

- In Year 1 establishing you in your new ministerial context and practice, and supporting your preparation for ordination as priest.
- In Year 2, deepening your practice and understanding of mission and ministry with the theological tools and skills you need to contextualise this.
- In Year 3 helping you prepare for life-long ministry and to take up a post of responsibility to be entered into with skill and confidence.



# IME2 to equip for ministry

At the heart of the programme are residential events which bring together a year-group of curates. They reflect the diversity of the Church, while the different ministry contexts reflect the diversity of the Diocese. This cohort is the primary context for the essential learning and formation to develop your ministries, focusing on ministerial formation, and on the development of relationships which enable mutual flourishing for all.

## Opportunities for academic awards

Alongside the IME2 training you may wish to continue studying on an accredited pathway with Common Awards. Curates who already have a Diploma award from IME1 may register for a BA in Theology, Ministry and Mission. Others who already have a degree or higher award or are recognised as potential theological educators have opportunities to further their studies alongside their curate programme.



*Many second year curates have the opportunity to grow through visits to our link dioceses in Canada, Africa, or Germany— this group enjoying a day on safari.*

## Care for curates and families

The wellbeing of clergy and their families is very important to us. In addition to the supervisory aspects to curacy, we have a free, confidential counselling service (*the Listening Ear* scheme) for all clergy, diocesan staff and their families.

## More info

– contact the DDO (details on back cover) or visit [Lichfield.anglican.org/curacy](http://Lichfield.anglican.org/curacy)

"We have had amazing support from the diocese over the past 6 years through both of our curacies and that's not always been straightforward- particularly when 'life' sometimes gets in the way!

"But the support, through thick and thin has been fantastic, particularly discerning Adam's call to pioneering ministry and curacy under 'pioneer' supervision."

Revds Adam & Charlotte Gompertz



# Curacy in Lichfield Diocese

## For further information

In the first instance, please contact:

**The Revd Romita Shrisunder,**

Bishops' Director of Ordinands

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07949 033091 [M]

E-mail: [romita.shrisunder@lichfield.anglican.org](mailto:romita.shrisunder@lichfield.anglican.org)

## Find us on:

### AChurchNearYou:

Shrewsbury Abbey

[achurchnearyou.com/church/19495/](http://achurchnearyou.com/church/19495/)

St Peter's

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/4492/>

### Website:

<http://www.shrewsburyabbey.com>

### Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/shrewsburyabbey>

Twitter:

[@shrewsburyabbey](https://twitter.com/shrewsburyabbey)

Instagram:

[@officialshrewsburyabbey](https://www.instagram.com/officialshrewsburyabbey)

## Holy Cross, Shrewsbury

## Shrewsbury Abbey

and

## St Peter's, Monkmoor

