THE UNITED BENEFICE OF **EAST BLATCHINGTON & BISHOPSTONE**IN THE DIOCESE OF CHICHESTER

PARISH PROFILES

ASSOCIATE VICAR

FOR ST ANDREW'S & ST PETER'S



www.ebbchurches.org.uk www.facebook.com/bishopstonechurch www.facebook.com/stpeterseb

Our Diocese

DIOCESE OF

CHICHESTER

Proclaiming the Mystery of Faith

In 2025 this diocese celebrates the 950 th anniversary of witness and evangelisation from a mission base in Chichester, building on the earlier mission founded by St Wilfrid at Selsey. 2025 also marks the 1700 th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea with its reminder of the formative claim upon us of the catholic creeds.

These anniversaries are more than historical footnotes. They speak powerfully about the richness of faith and mission that is our inheritance locally and universally. Inspired by that inheritance, we seek to be a household of faith that is endlessly curious about how the Holy Scriptures and the sacraments of the New Covenant enable us to know, love and follow Jesus Christ in today's noisy and distracted world.

If God is calling you to join us in the task of proclaiming the mystery of faith in some part of this diocese, we pray that the contribution of your gifts and experience will enrich our witness and deepen your own discipleship.

THE CHURCH

+Martin

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Is God Calling you here?

Is God Calling you here?



The United Benefice of East Blatchington and Bishopstone comprises two equally beautiful but distinct church communities and buildings. We are seeking a House for Duty, Associate Vicar to come and minister as part of our team and alongside our congregations, to help us continue on the journey that God has given us. Our new Associate Vicar will join us at an exciting time where we are working to deliver our Mission Action Plans (written in 2021) and already seeing the first fruits of growth and renewal in our United Benefice. You can see our full MAPs on our webpage for this vacancy.

As a United Benefice we have identified areas of ministry that we can share in and the areas of ministry that remain distinct and unique to each church. In this parish profile we share with you our common Benefice ground and our distinct Parish grounds. We hope that you will see that this is an exciting and joyful place to minister, enriched by a strong ministry team and blessed by faithful and committed church communities. Though both churches have a commitment to liturgical worship, both churches are open to embracing new possibilities,

Person SpecificationWe are hoping for a priest who:

- is faithful in prayer and worship
- has a commitment to the sacraments
- loves people and is outward looking
- flourishes within a team
- delights in pastoral ministry
- can balance tradition & vision
- has some technological skill

whatever gifts you might bring, we are ready to embrace and adapt.

including the use of technology to reach new generations. We recognise that God has been and is already busy amongst us, therefore central to his plan is an aspiration to foster and consolidate confidence and build capacity in order to respond to the God-given opportunities and challenges that we have before us. Some of this work is underway, some of this work is aspirational and some of this work is shared between the two churches of our United Benefice. All is considered for proclaiming the joy of the Gospel; preserving the place of St Andrew's

Is God Calling you here?



and St Peter's as a beating heart in their parishes and making known the presence of Christ in our community.

The Rector, minstry team and parishioners are passionate about being the Anglican Church for the people with us and around us. We continue to work hard to recover from Covid-19 but have been blessed by being central to the wider community efforts to support those in need. More recently our Rector has guided our United Benefice to lead on community partnerships, first serving the town with a shopping and support system during times of lockdown (SVET) and more recently leading the community support for displaced Ukrainians (Seaford for Ukraine) arriving here. Embracing the opportunities brought by technology is central to our future and has already strengthened us.



Our new Associate Vicar will live in the parish of Bishopstone (the Rector lives in East Blatchington) and work closely with the Rector to serving across the United Benefice. Though primarily leading the worship, occasional offices and prayer life of St Andrew's, we hope our new Associate Vicar will exercise a presence and ministry across the Benefice, where appropriate and feasible. It is vital that our new Associate Vicar will work collaboratively with The Rector who will adapt and embrace the particular gifts and experience that the Associate Vicar will bring with them. You will be well supported by an excellent ministry team, administrative support, and a hard-working Rector.

The Clergy House at St Andrew's

Situated just minutes (by car) from the church in Marine Drive, this detached chalet bungalow with unhindered sea views has versatile accommodation, lounge, dining room, kitchen, bathroom, 2 bedrooms one with wc, study. There is a staircase leading to a further bedroom en-suite. Gardens front and rear mainly laid to lawn. The bungalow is on a local bus route into Seaford, within walking distance of the main buses to Eastbourne or Brighton.

The station is also within walking distance with direct trains to Brighton and services to London changing at Lewes.

Where we Are

The Parishes of East Blatchington and Bishopstone are both bracketed by the East Sussex coastline and the South Downs. Each parish benefits from the beauty of these locations and the life that comes with living close to the amenities and services offered within the gentle and peaceful town of Seaford.

St Andrew's Church, Parish of Bishopstone pop. circa 3,000

The Community and Parish

The parish of Bishopstone lies on the western edge of Seaford, approximately two miles from the town centre. The parish encompasses the village of Bishopstone and the hamlet of Norton, with the two modern housing developments of Hawth Hill and Harbour View which are separated by the A259. The village itself is not served by public

transport but is accessible by private transport or on foot. Within the parish are three farms and two seasonal caravan parks, the Sailing Club, Tidemills and many popular and busy walking routes - many walking right through Bishopstone Churchyard as part of their route. The Parish Hall, which is owned and administered by a trust, is adjacent to the churchyard and its toilets are made available for church use.

St Peter's Church, Parish of East Blatchington pop. circa 9,000

The Community and Parish

The parish of East Blatchington began as a rural village and has since welcomed residents who have increased the population through the years of residential housing. It stands either side of the A259, neighbour to both Bishopstone and Seaford Parishes. The parish encompasses

a mix of old and new buildings, seven care homes, two nurseries, a golf-club, a few shops, one public house, one (non-church) primary school and two residential special schools. It combines residential housing with beautiful walking routes and many social clubs (often in the Chapel Rooms).

Useful websites for the area

www.seafordtowncouncil.gov.uk www.southdowns.gov.uk www.tidemillsproject.uk www.visitlewes.co.uk/explore/seaford www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk www.eastsussex.gov.uk/

Our Churches - in numbers









	St Andrew's	St Peter's
Electoral Roll 2022	92	116
Baptisms per year	between 4-6	between 6-10
Funerals per year	approx 15-20	approx 15-20
Weddings per year	between 3-6	between 1-3
SERVICES & PRAYER	Average Attendance	Average Attendance
Mid week Mass	Weds 10am 6-10	Weds 10.30 3-10
Morning Prayer	n/a	Mon-Sat - 9.30 5-10*
Breathing Space	Last Fri. 6.15pm 4-8	Every Mon 6pm 5-10
Evening Prayer	Weds 5.30pm 4-8	Sun 6pm 4-11
Rosary Group	n/a	Tues 6.15pm 5-12
Evensong	First Sunday 10-20	On Feastdays 15-20
Compline	n/a	Weekdays 8pm**
Sunday Eucharists & Choral Matins 2nd Sun at St	Sunday 8am 15 Sunday 10.30am 25	Saturday 5.30pm 20 Sunday 8am 12 Sunday 10am* 52

www.ebbchurches.org.uk

*'Hybrid' worship both in person and online ** Online only

Ministry as a United Benefice

The parish of St. Andrew and the parish of St Peter, five-minute drive away from each other, were joined to form the United Benefice of East Blatchington and Bishopstone in May 2008 — with a full-time stipendiary Rector based at St Peter's (living in East Blatchington) and a House for Duty priest based at St Andrew's (living in Bishopstone). Over the years since we have found a greater degree of working together, however each church remains firmly distinct from the other.

The Core Ministry Team

You will be joining a team who work well together to support and maintain the life of this United Benefice. Friendly and collaborative, the team are led by The Rector and we work together to offer beautiful and holy worship, serve our parishes and community, and continue discerning the path that Christ has laid before us. As a benefice we are committed to nurturing new vocations.

Our Common Ground

We appointed a Benefice Administrative Assistant in January 2022. Though Jan works for just 12 hours each week, she now takes care of the financial paperwork for funerals, baptisms, general enquiries, the website, posters, enewsletters and social media, among many other things! Jan is fast becoming the quiet backbone of our parish and her work liberates our clergy to focus on the ministry to which they were called. This post is paid by 50% contribution from each PCC and is based in the St Peter's Chapel Rooms Office.



Rector Rev'd Arwen Folkes (MA)
Associate Vicar is vacant
Asst Curate Rev'd Joe Padfield (MA)
Administrator Mrs Jan Stringer-Quinn
Reader Mrs Kay Blackburn
Honorary Assistant Clergy
Fr Eric Pollard, Fr John Harrington,
and Fr Chris Collison.
Many committed & faithful members of
the church share in the ministry.

Ministry as a United Benefice



Benefice Pastoral Team

With seven care homes in the parish of East Blatchington, (that serve both parishes and wider town) and an increasing number of people who find themselves housebound, we have developed a pastoral ministry to include the provision of Home Communions, pastoral visiting, and 'Prayer and Praise' services in our care homes. Having identified that this ministry would be stronger by forming a Benefice Team, the Pastoral Team is currently chaired and led by our Assistant Curate, Joe Padfield and under the auspices of this team there is a Care Homes Coordinator who organises services within the homes. Clergy and lay ministers in this team take communion to housebound individuals in their homes and in care homes, the sick and lonely are visited. There is a pastoral team database for members to complete to highlight any issues and to keep track of what is going on. Many people in the parishes look out for one another on an informal basis. We hope that an Associate Vicar may help us with this in the longer term as it is central to the Mission of both parishes.

Learning & Praying Together

We have found that members of our United Benefice appreciate coming together to learn and pray. We find crossover and fellowship in our prayer and study groups. We have a well attended and lay-led weekly Bible Study Group, regular courses and lectures. This area could be strengthened further with opportunities for shared worship and socialising.

Ministry as a United Benefice

Baptisms

We have an open, affirming and inviting approach to holding baptisms for people who live in both our parishes. Making these events as the gracious and beautiful welcome that they should be, but also trusting that God is busy in the life of the family in ways that may not yet be known to us. Our CYF work has partly emerged out of our batism ministry and we are ever conscious of creating stepping stones and opportunities into the faith for the families that God brings to our church doors.



Children and Young People As a Benefice we have built up a very focused and careful relationship with key families and young people in our two parishes. We have been honest about both our capacity and reach. We understand that other churches are called to wide open social children's work, but we are called to nurture and focus on smaller numbers. Embracing this has been absolutely key to the growth we are witnessing in this area. Again identifying that we would be stronger offering a Benefice



approach to this ministry we serve two distinct age groups:

Little Fishes – currently meets monthly and offers a very special time to 'stay, play, and pray' together. Rooted in a theology of forming fellowship and Godly-Play story-telling this is a group to which we invite all of our baptism families. It serves ages 0-7 and launched in November 2021, growing from strength to strength and moving between both

church buildings.

Café Church – this fellowship of 11-16 year olds meets monthly in the St Peter's Chapel Rooms and includes members from both parishes. We spend time together eating, crafting, playing games and making space to pray and learn about our faith. This group began as a set of confirmation classes in May 2021 (five members were confirmed and one received into Holy Communion) but has continued on from there.





The Parish

The ecclesiastical parish of Bishopstone – St.Andrew in the County of East Sussex, lies within the Diocese and Jurisdiction of the Lord Bishop of Chichester, the Archdeaconry of Brighton and Lewes and the Deanery of Lewes and Seaford. Its Patron is the Bishop of London. In 2008 the parish became a United benefice, but remained distinct, with the adjacent parish of East Blatchington – St. Peter. The Rector of the United Benefice is primarily based at St Peter's Church

but ministers across both churches.

churches.

The Building & Churchyard

St Andrew's is a very important Sussex church with a history beginning in the 7th century and being added to over the subsequent generations.

Primarily of Anglo-Saxon and

Norman architecture she is a very special church. Standing





in the village of Bishopstone, approximately one mile north of the main A259 coast road. It is a Grade 1 listed building and is the only place of worship in the parish. The Church was built between 600 and 800 AD and is perhaps the oldest Saxon Church in Sussex. A programme of restoration following our Quinquennial in 2021 is in hand. We greatly benefit by having as a Fabric Officer a retired surveyor and a member of the congregation. The church provides seating for about 130. We have an open churchyard which is well maintained by contractors, and overseen by our Fabric Officer, with memorials and burials by agreement with the Rector. Many folk visit to tend graves and appreciate its sacredness. Its peacefulness is much appreciated by local folk and many ramblers stop and find a bench while they eat their lunch. It is a very special place indeed.



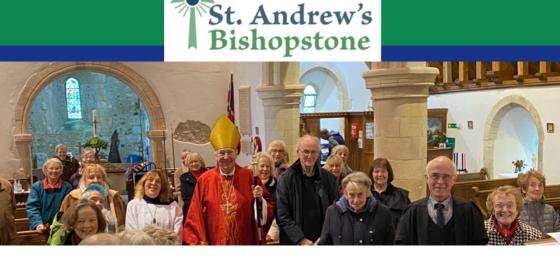
Our Worship Our worship is based on the Book of Common Prayer and 'Hymns Old and New', we lean towards being Prayer-Book Catholic, but while we value tradition we also acknowledge that within the congregation there is a wide variety of Christian backgrounds. We have a Director of Music and Choir Master with a choir of 8 adult members. There is a tremendous feeling of 'family' within the congregation, which has come about by the desire to see the life and mission of St. Andrew's alive and active within the Parish and community.



St. Andrew's, Holy & Historic Heart of the Parish

We are committed to growing as the Holy and Historic Heart of the Parish by delivering our Mission Action Plan (MAP) within the diocesan strategic aims: *More Open, More Converted, More Generous, More Engaged*. Our MAP has been written after a consultation through which we listened carefully to our wider community, our existing congregation and younger members and all held in a faithful process of prayer and discernment.

More Open We are engaging with our parish community post covid. Last December we re-introduced a Christingle Service, and Outdoor Carols, as well as keeping our traditional Nine Lessons and Carols. It has been tradition for more than 10 years to mark Sea Sunday every July with a special service supporting Mission to Seafarers. Inviting representatives of watery organisations to join us in worship. Our Fete/Open Church events are well supported by the local community. We acknowledge our Patron Saint's Day with a lunch and a Gift Day Appeal which raised £4,000 towards our children's worker in 2021. Having recently benefited from a wonderful legacy we are pursuing the possibility of creating toilet facilities attached to the church. Currently we have use of the facilities in the parish hall. To have our own facilities including a tea making area would open up even more possibilities for the future.



More Converted We do give a warm welcome to newcomers and visitors. Our forlorn Eucharist service books have been reprinted with a modern feel and we have recently joined the Prayer Book Society. We offer learning and growth, through lectures, concerts, quiet days, and cultural events through our Arts @ St.Andrew's. We are always delighted by the support that our events are shown by members of our local community and we are comitted to building up the relationships that will break down any

barriers to people coming to be with us. When we have the church open on Wednesdays and Saturday there is always a steward on duty to welcome visitors.

More Engaged As the parish church we wish to ensure that we make it easy for people to engage with our church with appropriate communications and the nurture of relationships over time. We hope to continue pro-actively building up our enewsletter distribution list and intentionally using both print and online methods to communicate, and to maintain our visibility.









The things people say:

from our visitors' book

"How great to find a church so well-maintained, well-used for the Mass and so well loved."

"An absolute treasure. So well worth visiting. Tranquil, ageless, beautiful."

"A beautiful church which is peaceful and settles the spirit."

"Very lovely church and helpful steward on duty. Keep going."

from our congregation

"A safe and friendly haven filled with the peace and prayers of people past and present"

"I find this a special place for prayer, reflection and solace. Very much a church family, being friendly, helpful and supportive."

"A very special place, perfect for prayer and contemplation by the statue of Our Lady where I sit. I absolutely love it!"



More Generous We recognise that giving is far more than money. We wish to nurture the spirit of generosity towards our wider community and to respond to the needs of the wider world by actively engaging with other parish charities, groups and organisations. We are a member of Churches Together in Seaford, who have a strong Ministers' Fellowship. We support the local Christian Aid committee with their appeal week, and annually organise a fundraising Cream Tea in the parish hall. During the pandemic all the churches worked together with other agencies, and are again responding currently welcoming people from Ukraine and supporting the host families.

Finance

We like many other churches suffered financially during 2020 due to Covid and its restrictions. However we weathered the storm and have been blessed by the generosity of our present congregation and those who have passed away bequeathing to St. Andrew's wonderful legacies. We are grateful for an excellent treasurer who has helped us to steward our resources. We have kept pace with the ever-increasing costs of our parish share contribution £36,216 for 2021, as well as maintaining our annual charitable giving, housekeeping commitments, and keeping up with the demands of health and safety regulations and safeguarding. We are proud of our stewardship in maintaining our Grade I listed building.

Charitable Giving

Our charitable giving is reviewed each year by our Charities Sub- Committee. The sum of £3,000 was distributed In 2021 as follows:-

· Dande Stravani- the education of a young Indian girl.

This is a continuing commitment.

- · Lent BOXES choice of three Computers for Charities
- · Seahaven First Responders St. Wilfred's Hospital Eastbourne
- · Beachy Head Chaplaincy Team Mission Aviation Fellowship
- Waves Family Support HOMELINK Lewes District Council and CTS working together for the homeless.
- · Diocesan Family Support Work Livability Helping disabled people
- · Mission to Seafarers Sea Sunday Service donating the collection to The Mission to Seafarers, together with personal offerings.



The Parish The ecclesiastical parish of East Blatchington – St. Peter, in the County of East Sussex, lies within the diocese and jurisdiction of the Lord Bishop of Chichester, the Archdeaconry of Lewes and Brighton and the Deanery of Lewes and Seaford. The parish serves the densely populated western side of the town of Seaford. The patron of the parish is the Bishop of Chichester and we are beneficed to the church of St Andrew's.

The Building & Churchyard The Church of St Peter is a grade II* listed building and lies within the East Blatchington conservation area. Evidence suggests that the church building dates from the early 12th century, but that this was a sacred site in pre-Christian times. It is built mainly of flint with a tiled roof and shingled spire, topped with a gilded weathercock which was erected to mark the Millennium. In February 2022 four pews were removed and the floor levelled mid nave. This has



created a flexible and welcoming space for young families and offers accessibility to people with mobility issues. Chairs have been purchased and the space is now used for small prayer groups and activities. On 29th March Bishop William Hazlewood



dedicated the space as the Lady Chapel. There is a ramp available to enable access up the single step into the chancel. The churchyard is closed for burials but cremated remains are interred in a 'remembrance garden' area. Recent years have seen the addition of several benches which are well used and we are in the process of creating a community memorial garden for the victims of Covid. The Church Hall, known as the Chapel Rooms, which is adjacent to the church, offering a main hall, parish office, kitchen, upstairs room and toilets. The hall is in almost constant use by our church and members of the community.



Our Worship

Prayer and the worship of God are of central importance if we are to carry out our mission to proclaim the joy of the Gospel and make known the presence of Christ in our community. In our worship we value our modern Anglo-Catholic tradition within the liturgy and offer liturgies in line with that tradition. The Eucharist is at the centre of our life and we understand the 'Mass' to be absolutely connected with the Missio Dei in our parish. We pray together daily as a parish, in various forms, and offer Quiet Days.



Open hearted, open minded, open to God, Open to All. St Peter's has long been a parish that seeks to be friendly, inclusive and welcoming to all. In the past three years since Revd Arwen Folkes has been our rector, we have seen growth and development in many aspects of our parish life, not least an increase in our life of prayer, the





arrival of new members and collaborative involvement with community groups in delivering projects. It is impossible to make an assessment of these years without taking into consideration the impact of the Covid pandemic and now of course, the conflict in the Ukraine, and our response to these, has contributed greatly to our life together. We are committed to growing in our openess and are working to fulfil the 2021 Mission Action Plan.

Open to God we are committed to our life of prayer and ensuring that others are able to enter our doors to connect with the prsence of God. Daily morning prayer has created a rhythm of prayer in our parish along with the regular Compline services (online). Our weekly prayer groups meet to pray the Rosary, to keep silence and our less regular Quiet Days open the church up with



prayer stations, Taize and others ways of praying. We keep the church open every day (without stewards) between the hours of 9am and 4pm and we know this is greatly appreciated by the wider community. With the benches in place we often meet people seeking peace in our church and grounds. We are committed to our Eucharistic worship and there are many who enjoy studying and engaging with their faith and scriptures.

Open Hearted we are keen to see a greater diversity in age, gender and ethnicity within our congregation and with this in mind we have registered with the Inclusive Church Network of churches and have displayed a welcoming notice in church. In this vein we are progressive and

to get out and about.



Open Minded There is a weekly Bible study group. Lent and Advent courses are held, with the option of attending in person on one occasion or via Zoom on another. The material has then been made available to anyone who missed the sessions. During the preparation of the 2021 Confirmation candidates, the rector kept us informed of the course they were following. In response to the interest this sparked she ran a three week Confirmation Refresher Course. Going forward, we aim to offer opportunities for

can be viewed on the website. Copies of this are delivered to people who are unable



learning through lectures and encourage engagement with courses and opportunities. We are currently developing a parish library from which the congregation can borrow spiritual reading books. It is our goal to further review the environmental impact of our behaviours as a church and make changes where we can to reduce our carbon footprint.

Open to All every day

Whilst our ancient building is beautiful, it does create challenges to welcoming and accommodating families with young children, people with disabilities, and those who are vulnerable and for or this reason, in February 2022 the nave was reordered, details of this are in the chapter about the church building. There are large print versions of the weekly bulletin and hymn books and children's activity bags. We have been blessed by the arrival of new parishioners, some finding us online following the prompt and successful live-streaming of services during lockdown, some moving into the area and hearing about us through others.



There was great celebration in October 2021 when Bishop William Hazlewood confirmed 5 young people from Cafe Church, 5 adults and received one adult into the Church of England as well as one young person being received into communion. (pictured left).

We have also discovered the joy and strength of working in partnership and as a result collaborate with a local charity Seafriends in enabling them to run a weekly memory cafe called Forget Me Knot in our Chapel Rooms rent free. Members of our congregation are among the volunteers recruited by Seafriends to help with this.





Our People and Activities

PCC roles: two Churchwardens, Treasurer, Secretary, Safeguarding Officer, Electoral Roll Officer, Health and Safety Officer, three Deanery Synod Representatives. Other roles carried out by lay people: pastoral assistant, children and young people's assistant, serving team, sacristy team, buildings team, sidespeople, flower arranging team, church magazine (Cross Keys) editor, hall bookings coordinator, Christian Aid reps, World Day of Prayer reps. There is a team who serve refreshments after the Sunday 10.00am service.

Members of the congregation are active at eucharistic services in administering the chalice, leading the intercessions and giving the readings. They also share in leading Evening Prayer, Breathing Space, Rosary and Morning and Evening Prayer. A monthly Parish Prayer Diary is produced as a resource for those participating in the life of daily prayer. Music is under the direction of a young organist and our

enthusiastic choir leads the congregation in singing hymns and seasonal settings for the eucharist. There is an active branch of the mothers union and we are keen members of the inter-denominational Churches Together in Seaford.



2022 Walk of Witness with Churches Together Seaford

An Art and Craft group meets once week and there is a regular Crochet Circle, we have had Parish Rambles and hope to organise more (weather permitting). We are in the process of developing and building up our hospitality and fund-raising activities following the disruption caused by the pandemic. We have a highly popular programme of East Blatchington Lectures which has made a successful return in 2022 following the interruption caused by Covid. Prior to the pandemic we ran outreach events such as flower festivals and open gardens and it is hoped we will return to these. In 2021 we held a Craft Fair. Our annual Plant Sale is always very popular and raises valuable funds for the church and there was recently a second hand book sale.

And Finally ...

Thank you

for taking the time to read our Parish Profiles and prayerfully consider whether this might be the next place you are being called to serve. We are praying hard for someone commmitted to leading worship with a depth of prayer, and who will help us to look outwards and inwards to discover the Kingdom of God within ourselves, our churches, and within our world. Warmth, honesty, humility and a genuine love of Christ and people are what works well in these parishes. You might also like to visit our website, social media pages and Youtube Channel which will give you evern more of an insight. Please know that we are praying for you and we hope that you will pray for us too.

The Prayer of St Richard

Thanks be to thee,
my Lord Jesus Christ,
for all the benefits
thou hast given me,
for all the pains and insults
thou hast borne for me.
O most merciful redeemer,
friend and brother, may I
know thee more clearly,
love thee more dearly,
and follow thee more nearly,
day by day.
Amen.

If you have questions, want to know more, or would like to quietly visit us, please contact The Rector who will be delighted to chat with you.

The Reverend Arwen Folkes, rectoryebb@gmail.com, 01323 892964

Mrs Hilary Norsworthy
(Churchwarden of St
Andrew's) and Mr George Rix
(Head Server at St Peter's) on
receiving the Order of St
Richard in 2019, in
recognition of their long and
faithful service in these
parishes.

