

Parish Profile



St Michael and All Angels' Church **Jarvis Brook** **East Sussex**

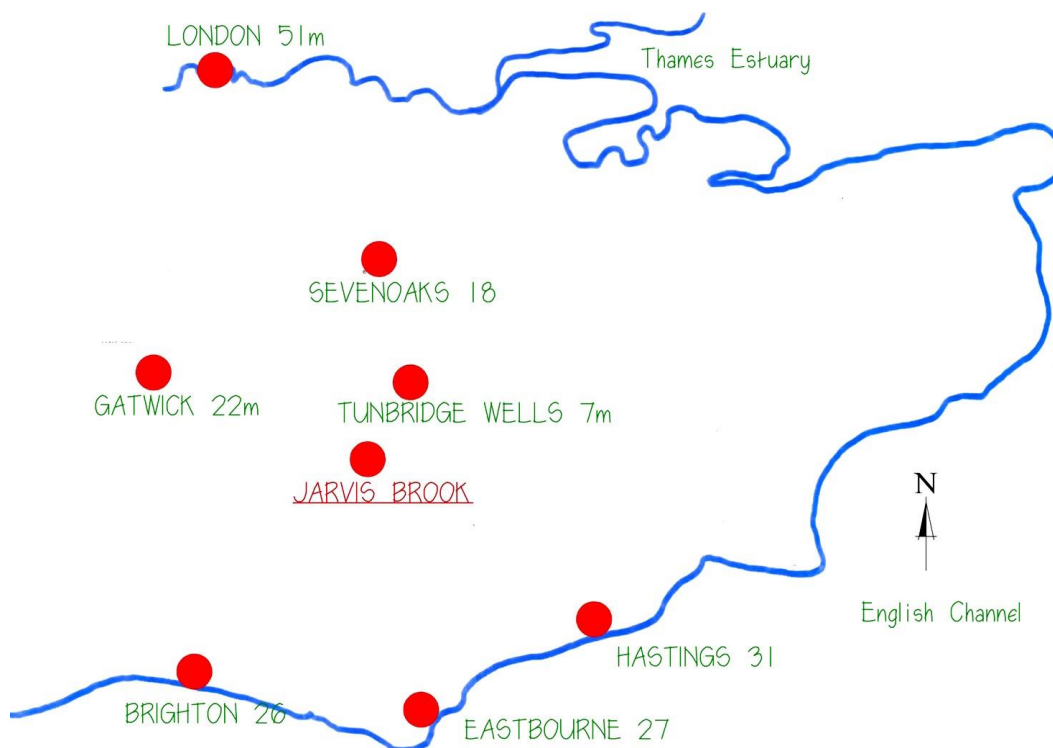
An inclusive church
A welcoming church
A loving and optimistic church
A caring and serving church
A church which gives thanks to God in celebration
of all that we have received through Jesus



St Michael and All Angels'

St Michael's is a parish offering great opportunity for new growth, with an enthusiastic congregation, two experienced Readers, committed Churchwardens, vergers and PCC. There is a dedicated team of sidesmen together with the altar guild and those who attend to church cleaning, coffee after church, weekly newsletter and flower arranging.

Situated in a beautiful part of Sussex with most of the Parish in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, just two miles east of the Ashdown Forest and adjacent to the Railway station with a direct line to London, it offers a uniquely attractive place to live, lead and serve in a lively Christian community.



Jarvis Brook in Context

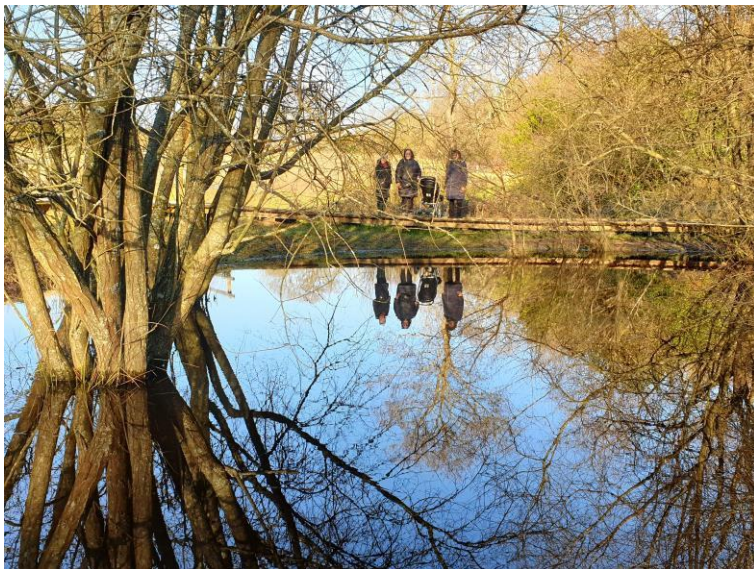
Jarvis Brook is an independent ecclesiastical parish of ca 6,000 people which lies within the civil parish of Crowborough. There are 2 other ecclesiastical parishes within the town. Crowborough has a population of just over 20,000 and is in the north of East Sussex, 7 miles from the Kent border at Tunbridge Wells which is the nearest large town. In addition to the train service to London (1hour 10 minutes) there are good road links to Brighton, Eastbourne, Hastings, Tunbridge Wells and Sevenoaks.

Together with Crowborough, Jarvis Brook is a centre for the surrounding villages and is adjacent to the Ashdown Forest, well known as being the home of Winnie the Pooh and which serves as an important recreational area. There have been several famous residents in the area, the naturalist Poet Richard Jefferies was recommended to move to Jarvis Brook as a health resort in 1885, Crowborough was also the home of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle from 1909 until his death there in 1930, and AA Milne wrote his books about Winnie the Pooh from his home on Ashdown Forest around 1925.

The Parish of Jarvis Brook

Jarvis Brook parish lies on the eastern edge of Crowborough and, until the arrival of the railway, was largely a scattered farming community. In the C16th, during the expansion of the iron industry, there were furnaces in Jarvis Brook and St Michael's was later built on the Furnace Field. Stone quarrying and brick making were widespread in the area until the end of C20th. With the arrival of the railway in the 1860s, it was possible to exploit brick making in Jarvis Brook on a large scale. The brickworks was the main source of employment until its closure in the 1980s.

The combination of a tradition of industrial activity and the railway led Jarvis Brook to be the commercial centre for the local area which is still the case today. To support this steady expansion at the end of the C19th, in 1883 a combined chapel of ease and infants' school was built in Jarvis Brook followed by the building of the present church building in 1905, still remaining within the Parish of Rotherfield until 1935 when it became an independent ecclesiastical Parish.



The Parish also contains three areas of Country Park. It has a network of rural footpaths which give good access from the built-up area to the surrounding countryside – great for dog walkers, biking, rambling and outdoor pursuits.



Beloved by A A Milne and only a few minutes away is the Ashdown Forest with Hundred Acre Wood and Pooh Sticks bridge about which he wrote.

The church is in a pivotal position between the railway station, thriving commercial estates, housing estates and a small but busy high street. The C19th infants' school is now a thriving primary school and the Beacon Academy, adjacent to our Parish boundary, is one of the best secondary schools in the county. Within the Parish there is a first class doctor's surgery, a Guide group, a village hall, a social club, a Tesco, a Sainsbury, an independent bakery, a very well-run community waste site and a pub.

St Michael's Church Life

St Michael's is a welcoming church which embraces all people and provides for the local community.

Since the beginning we have been able to demonstrate growth in our church. With the loosening of Covid restrictions we have been able successfully to bring back greater participation in our worship and social activities which have attracted more people to the church and re-inforced local community regard for St Michael's as a defining feature of Jarvis Brook, even if they do not attend regularly. With encouraging support from visiting clergy we have a fully planned programme for our services up to Christmas interspersed with a number of social activities.

You often hear local people refer to "our church" as an important part of the life of Jarvis Brook. Church life is greatly facilitated by having an excellent hall immediately adjacent to the church.



Our Worship

St Michael & All Angels is a Eucharist-based church with sung Holy Communion as our main service every Sunday. It is led by a ten strong choir under our enthusiastic professional organist and choir leader.



We also have a Fresh Expressions Service, Worship for All, for parents and young children, led by one of our two Readers and a small Worship Group.



We also have occasional services such as on All Souls, at Harvest Festival and on Remembrance Sunday. Lent courses are held each year and prayer groups are held in people's homes throughout the year.



As an inclusive church, lay members are encouraged to be involved in the services by reading the lessons and leading the intercessions.

Our two very experienced Readers normally preach once a month each and lead intercessions.



The church seats 75 in the nave plus choir stalls for 16 in the chancel. There are no side aisles or chapels. There is a ramped access for disabled and wheelchair users.

The chancel is flanked on one side with the vestry and robing area and on the other with the organ and console. After a successful organ appeal, we plan to overhaul the organ next year.

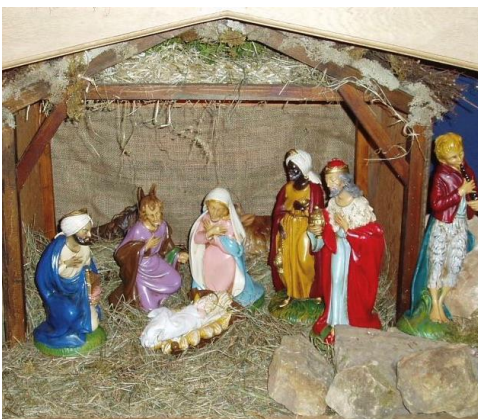
We are very fortunate to have extremely skilled flower arrangers who make the church exceptionally beautiful at festivals. This enhances our church life and makes us attractive to visitors.



The church has a strong tradition of choral music in our main service, with the congregation joining in enthusiastically, and the choir meets weekly to practise and maintain this tradition and to prepare anthems for special occasions. Worship for All relies on taped music but the families all join in singing a variety of music, including worship songs and action songs which the children especially enjoy.

We have regularly held a BCP service at 8am on a Sunday and 9.30am on a Wednesday. During the Interregnum we have focused our worship on a Eucharistic Service at 10am each Sunday.

Crucial to all St Michael's stands for, we have a team licensed for taking Home Communion to the sick or house-bound.



Worship throughout the year

We celebrate the traditional church calendar leading through Lent to Easter. At Christmas we hold a Carol Service on the last Sunday before Christmas, a very well attended Teddy Bear service on Christmas Eve, Midnight Mass and Christmas Morning Holy Communion.

Community Outreach



We keep in contact with our members with a weekly newsletter. Connection with the people of the parish is achieved by our varied outreach making use of our church hall.

Coffee Stop

A very popular coffee morning held every Tuesday and well supported by the community. The attendance has been steadily growing.



Hickory Dickory

A toddler group for children and parents/carers. This can be a lifeline for lonely parents, giving them an opportunity to interact with and gain support from other parents. With young families moving in to the new housing estates in our parish, activities like this are an opportunity for church growth.



BBQs and lunches

During the year we also have occasional BBQs or bring and share lunches for everyone to get together. As we emerge from the lock-downs of Covid and learn to accept personal responsibility for our safety, we are more confident in reaching out again to the wider parish with our worship and social activities to grow our faith.



Being a polling station

This brings people to the church hall to vote. The church is open during these days with members of the congregation on hand throughout the day to welcome anyone who might like to pop in.



Quiz evening and supper

An annual event at which great fun is had by congregation and visitors alike.



Tea at the Ritz

A special tea party held annually at which everyone dresses up appropriately and which attracts a broad spectrum of the local community and congregation.



Christmas Tree Festival

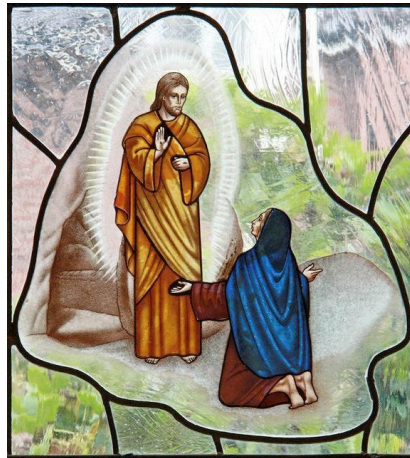
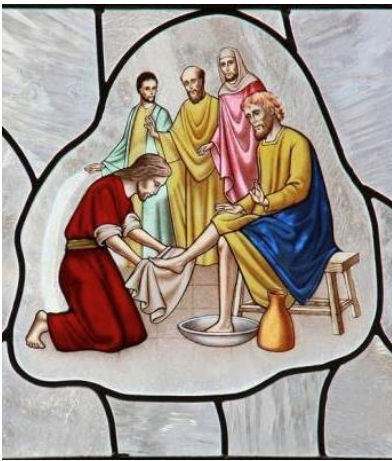
An important means of connecting with the local commercial and industrial community who enthusiastically decorate trees in the church. The festival brings in many people to view the trees who would not normally come into the church.



Beating the bounds

A fun walk for all the congregation round part of our boundary.

The Church windows



Several years ago the nave windows were replaced in a contemporary style to tell the story of the life of Christ. These 14 windows were dedicated in 1972 in memory of Revd Arthur Brookes a much loved earlier vicar.

St Michael's was built in 1905 to serve Jarvis Brook when it was still a part of Rotherfield parish. It is built of local stone in a traditional late Victorian Gothic style and is well-built. Over the years the church has been exceptionally well maintained and it is in good order.

It has a fine and unusual beautiful stained glass east window. It is inscribed in memory of John Parker Dickins and his wife 1935, the year in which St Michael's became its own independent Parish. Significantly it depicts St Michael our patron saint and all the angels surrounding Christ Pantocrator seated in the central window.



These windows are an enduring dedication of the church and a valuable teaching aid.

The Church Hall

The church hall is a timber framed building immediately behind the church. It consists of a good-sized hall, with large kitchen and lavatories. The screen and stage are used for children's services, meetings and talks. The hall is made available to the wider community for hiring and recreational activities such as short mat bowls which meet twice a week or family gatherings.



Parking

There is a one-way system round the hall and limited parking is provided between the rear of the church and the church hall. There are 4 parking spaces outside the church on the road and a free public car park approximately 200 metres away.

The Vicarage

The Vicarage is a detached house with 4 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms, situated on the western edge of the parish just over half a mile from the church and a mile from the centre of Crowborough. The house was built in the 1950s but significantly re-modelled and modernised in the 1990s. It has a garage with exterior parking for 3 cars and a south-facing garden behind the house.



St Michael's is looking for a new vicar – could this be you?

- Would you welcome the challenge of engaging with the wider parish community and the new housing coming to Jarvis Brook to bring the love of Christ into their lives through worship at St Michael's?
- Would you embrace all sections of the community, both the worshipping community and those who have yet to find Christ, and bring them to the love of God as members of your congregation?
- Would you harness the strong support of the committed PCC and current congregation to help you develop the worship and life of St Michael's?
- Would you feel inspired to spread Christian mission into a diverse and growing parish with a strong community spirit?
- Would you be excited by the opportunities and potential which Jarvis Brook offers for an increased congregation and an even more vibrant worshipping community?
- Would you enjoy living in a community with good facilities and in the heart of the Sussex countryside?
- Would you like to live, lead and serve in a vibrant Christian community?

**If your answers are yes, then you are the vicar we are looking for
at St Michael's and we welcome you with open arms**

Contact details

St Michael & All Angels' Church
Rotherfield Road, Jarvis Brook, Sussex TN6 3DY
01892 661565

stmichaeljarvisbrook@btinternet.com
www.stmichaelsjarvisbrook.org.uk/

Clive Wilson	Churchwarden	01892 654033
Mary Harris	Churchwarden	01892 653487
John Charman	Reader	01892 655554
Ella Simpson	Reader	01892 662773