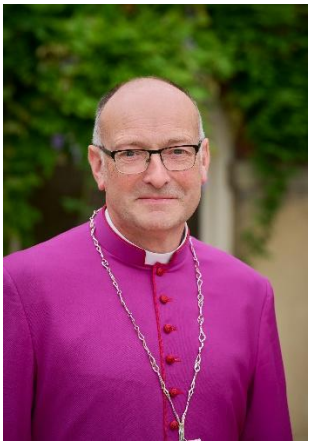


A Welcome from the Acting Bishop of Chichester

Thank you for your interest in a post within the Diocese of Chichester.

Across Sussex, our churches seek to be rooted in prayer, formed by Scripture, nourished by the Sacraments, and committed to serving our communities in Christ's name. We are deeply committed to the flourishing and renewal of parish life, believing that the Gospel has the power to transform lives, communities, and culture.

We are looking for priests whose faith in Jesus Christ inspires others to become his disciples, who value the parish as the heart of the Church's mission, and who can lead with wisdom, humility, and hope. We are not seeking superheroes, but authentic and prayerful clergy who share a passion for confident proclamation, generous service, and the building of God's Kingdom.

Bishop Ruth and I are encouraged by the increasing number of enquiries and applications for parish posts and are delighted to be licensing gifted women and men to serve across Sussex. We remain fully committed to supporting our parishes and are grateful that the Diocese continues to benefit from around 18% more serving clergy per head of population than most dioceses. We work hard to ensure our resources are used wisely in support of local mission and ministry.

We are equally committed to clergy wellbeing. We want our clergy to know that they are valued not simply for what they do, but for who they are. Our desire is to love, support, and treasure our parish clergy, helping them to flourish in their vocation and ministry.

Our vision is that every community should be served by a mission-focused parish, rooted in prayer, worship, witness, and service, sharing the good news of Jesus Christ and helping people grow as his disciples.

This parish profile tells the story of a community seeking to live out that calling. I hope it will help you discern whether God may be inviting you to explore this opportunity further.

With the assurance of my prayers as you discern God’s ongoing vocation for you

+Will

Bishop of Lewes and Acting Bishop of Chichester

Benefice Profile for Cocking with West Lavington, Bepton and Heyshott



The Church of St Catherine at Sienna, Cocking

Picture of fete 2025 in the rectory garden



The Church of St Mary the Virgin, Bepton



The Church of St James, Heyshott

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Website **https://www.underthedowns.co.uk/**

There is a vacancy for a half-time post for a Priest in a well-established rural benefice in West Sussex consisting of the three parishes of Cocking with West Lavington, Bepton and Heyshott, all within the South Downs National Park. It is within the Midhurst Deanery, which comprises many rural benefices. The benefice sits across the A286 in the heart of the beautiful South Downs National Park immediately to the north of the South Downs escarpment. Midhurst is 2 miles to the north, and Chichester 10 miles to the south.

We are praying that God may graciously bring us a priest who thrives on building relationships with people of all ages and stages of life and faith. We pray that they will have a spiritual gift of preaching and teaching and the ability to nurture both those new to faith and committed Christians. We hope that our priest will be comfortable in the modern catholic tradition of the church and confident with leading a range of worship styles and expressions. Ideally it would be wonderful if the priest has a fruitful record in ministry to children, young people and their families. The parishes have different traditions but have been successfully working together since 2015 and we pray that God may graciously provide us with a leader who guides us in the transforming gospel of Jesus Christ and who will lead us on our pilgrimage of grace.

Cocking

St Catherine's tradition is Anglo-Catholic but using modern language. Other than encouraging the spiritual development of church members through the sacraments and teaching of the Scriptures, the church sees community involvement as important. We would like to encourage children/youngsters to be part of church life so we are hoping that our new priest will be warm and outgoing, and who would take the village with him or her.

The candidate should be prepared to use modern forms of service using modern language.

Bepton

St Mary's has been flexible about having some services conducted by Readers, but prays also for a priest who can offer us communion. In summary the specific needs of St Mary's, in addition to those identified in the Benefice's Profile, are:
a willingness to conduct services according to the BCP and an ability to work with any Reader, retired priest or NSM (of either gender) in order to maximise the pastoral care (including visiting) to be given within the parish as part of the benefice.

Heyshott

The tradition of St James is neither Anglo-Catholic nor wedded to the book of common prayer, but is flexible in order to service the needs of the diversity of its attendees. Most regular attendees are retired, but there is a significant population within the village of younger residents who spend a significant proportion of their time outside the village, but who are nevertheless committed to church and village life. The church and its ministers

have been greatly valued amongst the non- church going residents of Heyshott, that is the legacy of a commitment to pastoral care over many decades shown by previous vicars.

We can offer:

- three supportive and welcoming congregations;
- supportive PCCs committed to spreading the worship of God through weekly services, study groups and outreach into the village communities and beyond;
- a 5 bed-roomed Rectory in Cocking with a spacious garden, stunning views over the downs, and attached garage;
- a rural setting with all age educational facilities within reasonable reach of Cocking Rectory;
- some assistance from retired clergy and musical support.

We are seeking a priest who will be:

- able to make us aware of the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit in our lives
- a good communicator, approachable, inspirational and encouraging to others;
- willing to have a high profile in the villages by maximising pastoral care (including visiting);
- supportive of the different styles of worship in the three churches, whilst introducing a degree of informality and innovation;
- keen to relate to and encourage more people of all ages to become part of the church, and committed to growing the congregations;
- willing to be flexible about days to take occasional services such as baptisms, weddings, and funerals as the need arises.

1. Benefice and Parishes general description

The current benefice was created in 2015 following the retirement of the minister of Cocking (with West Lavington) and Bepton and the minister of Heyshott. The rectory at Cocking was retained for the use of the vicar of the new benefice and the rectory at Heyshott was sold with some proceeds made available to the PCC to enable the heating of St James church to be upgraded. Two vicars have successfully served for approximately 5 years each as vicar of the combined benefice, resulting in a close and harmonious association between the 3 PCCs (who meet as a combined benefice) and the 3 congregations. For each of the two previous vicars, this was the first ministerial position, one prior to retirement, the other at the beginning of his parish ministry; their respective success leads us to consider that this benefice offers great attractions to an individual seeking a first position as vicar of a parish. We understand that there are no proposals for any further reorganisation of the benefice.

The benefice covers 4 villages and comprises the churches of St Catherine of Siena at Cocking in the parish of Cocking with West Lavington, St Mary the Virgin in the parish of Bepton and St James in the parish of Heyshott. The churches are not far from each other by road. The benefice is within the Diocese of Chichester and all three parishes are situated at the foot of the South Downs in the middle of the South Downs National Park and an Area of Outstanding National Beauty. The benefice is in a rural setting near the large estates of Cowdray and Goodwood.

The benefice has a website (underthedowns.co.uk). It is linked to parish websites (see for example heyshott.org.uk). The villages of Cocking and Heyshott each publish monthly newsletters which are distributed by hand to all village residents, and which promote church related activities alongside and in conjunction with other activities within the villages.

Chichester is the seat (albeit currently vacant) of the Bishop of this Diocese and the seats of both the county and district councils. All levels of education are provided up to and including university and vocational college training. Chichester has a medium-size general hospital including an A&E department. The city is well connected with rail, road and bus networks.

Midhurst provides the local schools for both primary and secondary education, a large modern leisure centre housing various community services, clubs, sports facilities and is a site for a mixture of events. The town has a sizeable health centre serving the town and surrounding area. There is a variety of shops and businesses typical of a small market town as well as a small trading estate.

Cocking

The parish of Cocking with West Lavington comprises two villages and was formed after the closure of West Lavington church in 2008. Before this, each village had its own parish church. For ease of reference, the parish of Cocking with West Lavington will be referred to in this profile as “Cocking”.

The village of Cocking is situated 3 miles south of the market town of Midhurst and 10 miles north of the cathedral city of Chichester and has a population of approximately 460. There is a village pub, the Blue Bell, which is a community hub and contains a shop, restaurant and rooms. There is also a car garage and a further B&B establishment. A regular bus service connects Cocking to Midhurst and Chichester which follows the A286 main road. The village has a modern village hall which is well used for parties, events, yoga and pilates sessions.

Cocking has a mix of age-groups and social mix. Although there are some young families, the balance is more towards the middle aged and older population. Most of the land surrounding the village is owned by the Cowdray Estate.

West Lavington is a small village about one mile south-east of Midhurst and has a population of approximately 300. The village is quite spread out and covers Cocking Causeway which houses two pubs. Most of the population is middle aged or older but there are a few families. Generally the residents are financially "well-to-do" and property prices are high. There are no shops, offices or industry and the village relies mainly on Midhurst for its immediate needs but consider themselves to be separate. There is a sizeable nursing home called Pendean operated by BUPA. There is also a privately run nursery catering for pre-school children that is housed in the former primary school which closed in 2008. There is no planned development in the village. The church was closed before the current benefice was created and is now deconsecrated.

Parish of Bepton

Bepton has a well scattered rural community lying within the Cowdray Estate some two miles in length between Midhurst to the north, running south and to the top of South Downs. By character it is predominately farmland. The historic C12 St Mary's Church is situated on southern end of the parish surrounded by farmland and is the only public building in the village. The parish is a mix of private family homes and Cowdray Estate cottages. There is a public house, now closed and currently seeking new tenant. The Park House Hotel has a spa and swimming pool for private members and hotel guests.

The Parish has around 104 households with a population of approx. 250 of mixed ages. Recently more young families have moved into the area.

St Mary's seeks to maintain strong links with the local community in Bepton by seasonal and festive services, community events and occasional concerts, pastoral care and visiting, plus support for local charities and causes.

Heyshott

The church is situated in the centre of an elongated parish lying 4 miles south of the town of Midhurst. The parish includes the hamlet of Hoyle to the east of Heyshott and extends across Heyshott Common to the dismantled railway bridge along the lane to Ambersham. The parish encompasses just under 130 households and about 240 individuals. Most houses are privately owned. There are a small number of tenanted properties which include some belonging to the Cowdray Estate and Hyde Housing Association with 28 tenanted properties.

There are two working farms in the village, Leggs Farm to the west (now farmed through contractors) and Manor Farm to the east. Heyshott retains the atmosphere of a village which is closely linked to farming activities.

The Unicorn public house is situated to the east of the church and has an excellent reputation for supporting community events. There is a well maintained village

playground. The village is well known locally for its torch led bonfire procession and fireworks, held on a Saturday close to 5 November, which has been running for over 50 years. This is regarded as one of the finest bonfire events in West Sussex, and attendance is frequently over 2,000.

There is a village hall known as the Cobden Hall where most of the village activities, including films and talks, are held. This is available for hire throughout the year and its use is free of charge for church activities. There is an annual village show exhibiting fruit and vegetables, flowers and crafts.

Two nature reserves, Heyshott Down and Heyshott Escarpment, are within the parish. These are Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) managed by the Murray Downland Trust, a chalk grassland conservation charity managed from the village.

There is a registered village green in the centre of the village, recognised for its flora together with the Common opposite the pub. There are still two properties in the village holding "Commoners Rights". The major part of the central area of the village is in a conservation area with a number of listed houses.

2. Churches

Cocking

St Catherine of Sienna is a fine medieval downland Grade I listed church dating back to the 11th C. Several alterations were made at a later date so one part is Early English (the Lady Chapel) and the nave was widened considerably in Victorian times to a very high standard. It can now seat 125 people and this capacity is regularly needed for major services. The church has three medieval bells and the building is in generally a good state of repair and well maintained. There is a pipe chamber organ built by Bishops in London with one single manual and three stops and has a fine tone. There is a fine 13th C fresco in a contemporary window arch which is mentioned by Pevsner.

The church is surrounded by an open churchyard where burials and interment of ashes regularly take place. A war memorial is just outside the church's boundaries.

Although West Lavington church is now closed and deconsecrated, the churchyard around it is still open and falls under the responsibility of the PCC. There are thoughts to close this churchyard to reduce maintenance liabilities. There is also an "overflow" churchyard in West Lavington which was a small plot of land donated to West Lavington church and now inherited by the PCC since amalgamation of the parishes. The future of that is yet to be determined.

The church has the support of a recently established Preservation Trust.



Bepton - St. Mary's Church and Churchyard

Christianity arrived in Bepton in 700AD with building of first church by St Wilfrid's Community, the church was noted in the Domesday Book. The current church (**Grade 1 Listed**) which replaced the earlier Saxon church was largely built by the Normans between 1180 and 1185. In 1878 the Victorians remodelled it, building the Chancel and added a vestry and south porch. A board with a list of the names of all the priests of Bepton starts in the year 1402.

The church is situated on a farm with a beautiful view towards the South Downs. The churchyard extended by gift of the 1st Lord Cowdray surrounds the church with space for future burials. There is defined area for the interment of cremated remains. Bepton Parish Council provide a grant each year towards churchyard maintenance.

In 2025 a major £187,000 renovation scheme was undertaken to the 12C tower to arrest structural movement, restoration of the bells and other works to roofs of the Nave, Chancel and Vestry so that the church is wind and weather tight. The project was funded by grants and donations supported by the then recently formed Friends of St Mary's Bepton Trust (Reg. 1208927). With completion of the works to the Tower the bells were rung for the first time in many years at our 2025 Carol Service.



To the rear of the church, under the Tower, pews were removed in 2018 to create an open multi space area for meetings, coffee after services, play area etc.
With the active support of the Parish and The Friends we plan to promote scheme of internal repairs and redecoration as our next project. Our church organ was replaced in 2023 with a new Viscount Chorum a 40 digital church organ funded by local donations and much enjoyed by our regular organist.

Some recent comments in our visitor book:
"One of the most loveliest churches in rural Sussex, What a view, enjoyed our picnic here."
"Thank you for showing me around your beautiful church. What a boon for Bepton to have a dedicated team looking after this special place"
"This is a special place, thank you for preserving it in both the building and spirit of the church which it still feels today."

"Lovely setting for an ancient church, open after Matins. God bless your works in the church"

Heyshott – St James Church

A chapel in Heyshott is mentioned in a 12th century charter. The Grade 2 listed church building dates from the 13th century and the south and west walls and the arcade between the nave and North aisle are original. The font comes from the original church and could be 12th century.

The church was linked with Stedham until 1881 when it was made an independent rectory in the gift of the Bishop of Chichester. In 1885 it was largely rebuilt with a new chancel and chancel arch, a doubling of width of the north aisle and the addition of the South porch. Glass dating from the early 16th century is preserved in one of the windows of the north aisle. There are three church bells, the first dating from the 14th century, the other two from the 17th century. Their chiming is automated.

The 2016 Quinquennial Report led to a project recladding the church spire and bellcote. The 2021 report indicated that the church was well looked after, and the building in generally good order, with no major problems. A further report has been commissioned in 2026.

The St. James Preservation Trust was set up about twenty-five years ago to provide funds for the preservation of St. James Church. The Charitable Trust financially supported the Bell Tower restoration in 2019. There is an extensive churchyard, still used for burials and interments, that is now maintained by an external contractor.

3. Church services

Benefice

Since the formation of the benefice in 2015 a joint benefice service of Holy Communion has been held on every fifth Sunday in the month throughout the year in each of the churches in strict rotation. Combined benefice services are also held on the 3 Sundays closest to the Patronal Festival dates for the 3 churches, two as morning services of Holy Communion, the one at St James as a Sung Evensong with refreshments in church afterwards. These occasional combined services have proved a successful way of bringing the three congregations together. Otherwise, with the exception of the 1st Sunday of the month at St Mary's Bepton, at least one service is held in each church on every Sunday. The joint service for Remembrance Sunday is held in each church in turn, with a roll call of those who died serving in the two world wars across the benefice.

The service rota has to date been set to enable the vicar to attend two churches on each of the first four Sundays of the month, with services at 9.30 am and 11.15 am respectively. However, St Mary's Bepton only holds services led by a minister on the 2nd and 3rd Sundays

of the month. On the 4th Sunday of the month there is a warden led service of hymns at Bepton and a minister and organist led service of sung Matins at St James Heyshott. Evensong is said each Sunday at 6pm at St James Heyshott, usually without a minister present.

In recent years, a full suite of daily Easter services from Holy Week Wednesday through to Easter Sunday has been held rotating through the 3 churches. The Palm Sunday service has been held as a benefice wide service at St James Heyshott and is preceded by a procession singing Easter hymns through the village. Christmas services include an Advent carol service at St Catherine's Cocking, a Christmas carol service at St Mary's Bepton and crib services on Christmas Eve at each of St Catherine's Cocking and St James Heyshott.

In recent years also, the vicar has led study groups in both Lent and Advent in the Rectory. There is enthusiasm within the benefice for the establishment of a broader bible study group across the benefice.

Cocking



St Catherine's has a Eucharist at 9:30 am every Sunday and a Family Eucharist which includes the Church Band and Choir at the same time each first Sunday of the month. The services use Common Worship as their rite. The Eucharist is followed by coffee and biscuits and many stay behind to talk to one another. On Wednesday morning, also at 9:30, there is a short Eucharist for Saints' days or otherwise morning prayer. A Requiem Mass is held on the last Wednesday of the month to remember the dead.

Attendance is typically 25 for a Sunday morning. Major festivals such as Christmas, Easter, Harvest, etc may attract 100 or more.

Once a month a morning Eucharistic service is held at Pendean nursing home in West Lavington. This service is well received by the residents and staff, and is an important outreach.

Christmas is a busy period with a Carol service with lessons and carols and choir singing, a children's crib service (usually full church) on Christmas Eve, followed by Midnight Mass at 9pm and Christmas Eucharist on Christmas Day.

At Easter time we have a contemplative vigil on Maundy Thursday, and a family-oriented setting up of the Easter Garden on Good Friday and Easter Eucharist.

The Remembrance Day service in November currently alternates between the 3 parishes.

Readings are from the New Revised Standard Bible. The Sunday services all include a sermon. There are normally three to four hymns from the Common Praise Hymn Book accompanied by an organist. Incidental organ music is played before and after the service and during communion. Cocking has an occasional SATB choir which sings one or two anthems at special occasions. For the Family Eucharist, often the Children's Hymn Book is used.

Services are generally relatively formal with a prayerful attitude of the congregation. The priest wears the chasuble applicable for the season. Candles are used on the altar and in procession. The priest reads the Gospel in the middle of the congregation. Sermons are of course a very important part of the service and have put the readings or theme in an historic and cultural context to teach the meaning of Christianity and to inspire the members of the congregation as to how they may live their lives in the Christian spirit.

Churchmanship is anglo-catholic using modern rites. The church is always open and has a very good library which is available for anyone to use.

Bepton



All services are from the Book of Common Prayer (1662). Lessons are read from a fine, large, Authorised Version of the Bible (1611). There is seating for about 60 in the pews plus a further 20 chairs in the tower. Both the congregation and visitors often comment on the attractiveness of the layout of the church. Over half the regular congregation come from Midhurst specifically to participate in a service according to the BCP.

Since 2015 the pattern of Sunday services has been
1st Sundays: 11.15hrs Sung Matins (temporarily suspended);
2nd and 3rd Sundays: 11.15hrs Sung Matins followed by a shortened Holy Communion led by The Rector;
4th Sunday: 11.15hrs recently introduced Half Hour of Hymns service to attract new people.

5th Sunday: 10.00hrs Benefice service of Holy Communion alternating between three churches by rotation.
We have a regular organist who plays at all services.

Average attendance at Matins is 10, and at Communion is similar.
Attendance on Christmas Day 2025 was 28 and 6 children.
And Carol Service was approx. 100.
We have occasional baptisms (2 this year), some funerals and occasional weddings (1 last year) when the church is usually full.

Heyshott

Church Sunday morning services have been varied as needed to cater for the wishes of a liberal congregation. The church has the benefit of an enthusiastic and talented organist able to lead services of Sung Matins and Sung Evensong when required.

Prior to the vacancy, the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Sunday services have been services of Holy Communion from Common Worship starting at 11.15 am. Historically one of these monthly services was held from the Book of Common Prayer.

On the 4th Sunday a service of Sung Matins is held; prior to the vacancy this was held at 9.30 am but it is currently being held at 10 am.

Sung Evensong with a combined benefice choir is held twice a year, for the patronal Festival for St. James and for Harvest (the latter followed by a Harvest Supper in the Cobden Hall). On other Sundays spoken evensong or compline is said weekly at 6 pm.

Occasional weekday special services are held for commemorations, such as the recent VE and VJ day anniversaries, and these are popular.

The church pews can hold 120 and the church can be full for weddings and funerals. Attendances for Easter Sunday and the Christmas Eve crib and carols service are frequently over 50 and the 2 Sung Evensong services are popular. However, ordinary Sunday morning attendance has reduced in recent years owing to deaths and illnesses, with average attendance now of about 12, and the PCC would welcome initiatives to reverse this decline. Attendance for the weekly evening service is generally low. There are typically two or three weddings a year and three or four baptisms a year at St James. In recent years, baptisms have usually taken place within regular Sunday morning worship.

4. Other team members

Cocking

There are two churchwardens, David Imlach, who takes care of the services and day to day running of the church and Denise Vickers who is responsible for the St Catherine's Day Feast, the Harvest Supper (both held at the Village Hall) and overseeing various rotas for the smooth running of the church.

There are a large number of other parishioners who play an active role in the church reading, arranging flowers and cleaning the church. We have a very active Church organist who leads and rehearses a choir for special occasions.

Bepton

There are currently only three members (inc. Treasurer) of the PCC, following two deaths and two resignations. Our churchwarden died last year and has so far not been replaced. A new Treasurer was appointed in May 2026 to commence in July releasing the existing Treasurer for other duties. Volunteers from the Parish keep the church clean and beautifully decorated with flowers, the churchyard is maintained by a local contractor from the Parish grant and volunteers tidy through the year.

The church is never locked, it is open to all people not just to regulars, serves a physical representation of God's presence, offers quiet contemplation for those seeking peace, prayer, reflection, it is a sign of invitation.

Heyshott

There are 6 elected members of the PCC in addition to the minister, the two churchwardens – one responsible for the quinquennial and churchyard maintenance, the other for maintaining the church worship – the treasurer and the Deanery Synod representative. Rotas are arranged for lesson reading, church cleaning and floral decorations.

5. Events in the benefice

Cocking and Bepton Fete

An annual fete is organised by a committee chaired by James Vickers (Cocking). It has been held for well over 20 years by Cocking and Bepton and provides essential income to both parishes; typical proceeds in 2025 were about £5,400 split between the two churches. The fete is held in the grounds of the Rectory. It is a traditional style of fete with cake stall, raffle, games and a tea stall, and there is normally a great community atmosphere.



Cocking

Members of the congregation are trustees (with one parishioner as chairman) manage The Currie Trust which was established to provide funds for the promotion of Christian knowledge and teaching to youngsters. The Trust has distributed considerable funds to local schools and churches upon application.

The church supports local and national charities through regular collections and promotion including for Stonepillow (a charity for the homeless in the area), Christian Aid, Trussell Trust, and others.

St Catherine's Feast
A lunch is held at the Village Hall to raise funds for the Church by donation.

Harvest Supper

Carol Service

Talks and Concerts

Bepton

(a) Carol Service
Experience has shown that St Mary's benefits by having its own Carol service on a Sunday afternoon in December. Parishioners who are not regular attendees at Sunday services arrive in considerable numbers. The biblical passages telling the Christmas story are now read by some of these parishioners.

(b) Concerts

Recently it has been our practice it has been the practice to hold at least one fund raising concert in the church on an afternoon in late spring/summer, and to give the audience refreshments outside in the churchyard afterwards. The occasion has proved to be of wide appeal to people in Bepton, Midhurst, Fernhurst and further afield. It helps to advance one of the PCC's objectives, which is to involve the parish and wider community in the use of the church building other than for weekly services. Such concerts raise money towards the maintenance of the fabric of the church. Due to restoration work we have not been able to hold one recently.

(c) Gift Day

For many years St Mary's church has held a Gift Day in August on Bepton Village Green attended by the Rector to receive donations. People stop and have a chat over coffee; it has become a social gathering. We now include a baking stall, produce and a raffle raising the profile of the event. Once again, it demonstrates the presence of the Church in the community.

Heyshott

The PCC relies primarily on three annual events to secure the income needed to meet the parish's expenses and maintain its quota.

(a) Cream Teas

This event is held in June in the Cobden Hall and the church marquee. An orchid walk up to Murray Downland Trust Reserve on Heyshott Escarpment is incorporated into the event. It is well attended by villagers and many people are drawn from a wide area to the event.

(b) Christmas bazaar

This is held in the Cobden Hall in late November or early December and is very successful in bringing villagers together.

(c) Gift Day

A well supported gift day is held annually on the Saturday in July immediately preceding the Sunday on which the Patronal Festival Sung Evensong.

Carol singing is arranged over 4 nights to cover nearly every household in the village; the final night's singing takes place in the Unicorn on Christmas Eve and historically this has been warmly embraced by the villagers of Heyshott. The PCC has usually donated an amount of approximately £1000 to the Children's Society in recognition of the success of the village carol singing.

Occasional concerts have been held successfully in church and there is scope to encourage more such. However, the scope for the church to be used more widely for weekday activities are limited by the availability of the Cobden Hall next door to the church.

6. Parish support teams

Cocking

- Treasurer David Earley is responsible for preparing accounts and reports, gift aid, tax returns as well as banking collections and paying bills.
- Nico Dekker is Surveyor of the Building and is responsible for looking after the fabric of the building
- Naomi Dekker is Director of Music and as well as playing the organ is responsible for the Church Choir and Band.
- Susie Burgess has been the Sacristan, but is currently away training for ordination.
- Jacquie Earley is an Acolyte.
- Ruth Nixon is the Benefice Secretary and, for the time being in the absence of a Priest is responsible for "Cocking Column", the village and parish newsletter. She issues a readers' rota and sends out a Pew sheet that keeps the congregation informed about the Sunday service.
- Peter Craig, Chair of the St Catherine of Siena Church Preservation Trust, which is a charity dedicated to maintaining and conserving the historic Parish Church. The Trust actively supports through fundraising the church's ancient fabric, monuments, grounds, and furnishings for the public benefit.

Heyshott

One Churchwarden is responsible for banking collections, opening and closing the church daily and taking matins and evensong when the incumbent is not available. The other churchwarden is responsible for the maintenance of the church and the upkeep of the churchyard.

There is a small team actively involved with the church:

- Penny Masterton and Jane Moran organise the flower arrangers' rota.
- Peter Harvey organises the reading rota for each Sunday.
- John Newman is our regular organist.
- Tricia Murray looks after the altar linen and chasubles and also the rota for Church cleaning once a month.
- One of the Churchwardens is responsible for setting up the church for the service.
- There is a rota for administering the chalice.

The Heyshott Rector and Churchwardens' Charity under the control of the Rector and one Churchwarden distribute the funds once a year to those determined as requiring assistance at the end of each financial year.

7. Financial position

All three parishes are presently in a position to pay their parish share. The following gives more details of the position of each parish to inform how finance is managed.

Cocking

There is a small committee which manages the parish's input into a major Christmas Fair of which the Church is a beneficiary for building a fabric reserve fund. It is PCC policy to build up a substantial fund to provide the security to be able to maintain the building for the future. This fund is restricted for that purpose. It is expected that our involvement with the Fair will continue for the foreseeable future.

Bepton

Our church, like so many rural churches face changing times. We do not have substantial reserves, but the PCC, through fundraising, continues to meet costs and payment of its allocated parish share (21%). The three parishes have agreed to continue with this apportionment during the interregnum.

The assistance of The Friends of St Mary's Church in fund raising and grant applications towards renovation work to the fabric considerably reduces the burden of maintaining the building to the PCC.

Heyshott

The PCC has significant reserves, and the maintenance of St James Church is supported by The St James Preservation Trust. The investment income of the PCC and the success of its regular events have enabled it consistently to meet its allocated share of the diocesan share attributed to the benefice.

8. Accommodation



The Benefice rectory is in Cocking approximately 300m away from the church on a substantial plot facing south and surrounded by lawn, bushes and trees. Views are over open aspect agricultural land on one side and the South Downs on the other. The house is a brick built under tiles detached property with 5 bedrooms, a sitting room and separate dining room and study. There is an attached single garage and a substantial drive capable of holding at least ten cars.

Two sheds in the garden set back from the property house tables and chairs and a marquee owned by Bepton and Cocking PCCs. These are used for the annual fete usually held at the beginning of September in the Rectory grounds.

Prayer for the future:

Heavenly Father, call to this your Parish and ours, a true shepherd, a person of God, a Minister of Christ; and make us, with them, a Parish joyful in worship and united in mission, working, caring, praising, loving, to the glory of your name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen