

September 2023

## Priest in Charge of Heage and Ambergate

Half time, three year fixed term  
appointment



# Archdeacon's Message

Archdeacon of Derbyshire Peak and Dales - Nicky Fenton



## Welcome!

These two churches have worked faithfully through a long vacancy and have worked hard to maintain missional engagement with their communities. There is an exciting opportunity to develop and build on the existing lay ministry and work with churches in the surrounding area of Belper to reimagine and reshape how the parishes are organised to work more effectively in mission across Belper and its surrounding villages.

This role would suit an enthusiastic priest with a pastoral heart who enjoys working collaboratively. Someone who can nurture individuals and teams, think creatively about outreach, and offer leadership and vision as missional opportunities are explored across the wider area in partnership.

We are seeking someone who will grow these churches, build on existing connections especially with Heage school, and broaden horizons that are pivotal for future collaboration within the wider area. You will find a great willingness and energy to look outward, to build on aspirations and seek to grow the church through generous faith, courageous hope, and life-giving love.

So, do read on, and if you would like an informal conversation, please contact [Ellie.ballard@derby.anglican.org](mailto:Ellie.ballard@derby.anglican.org), PA to the Archdeacon of Derbyshire Peak and Dales or call 01332 388675

Nicky Fenton

# Welcome

**As potential candidates for the 3 year fixed term half-time position of Priest-in-Charge of our United Benefice, we welcome you to come and visit and explore our surroundings. The details of our parishes are given below and describe the life of our churches and communities well, but you may well wish to drill down into the information more fully.**



## Deanery

Dove and Derwent Deanery is one of eight in the diocese and is part of Derbyshire Peak and Dales Archdeaconry. The two parishes lie in the northernmost part of Dove and Derwent Deanery, which skirts the west and north of Derby city. It comprises 34 parishes in all: Belper, at the north end, is the only significant town: Hilton is the next largest centre of population.

Within the next three years, there will be significant vacancies in Belper making this the ideal time to consider the shape and scope of ministry within this part of the deanery to ensure that moving forward into the future we are able to work collaboratively and effectively together to be good news for all in our communities.

The clergy Chapter, which meets monthly (except August), currently consists of eight parochial clergy and two prison chaplains at HMPs Foston Hall and Sudbury and is supported by a number of retired clergy with Permission to Officiate.

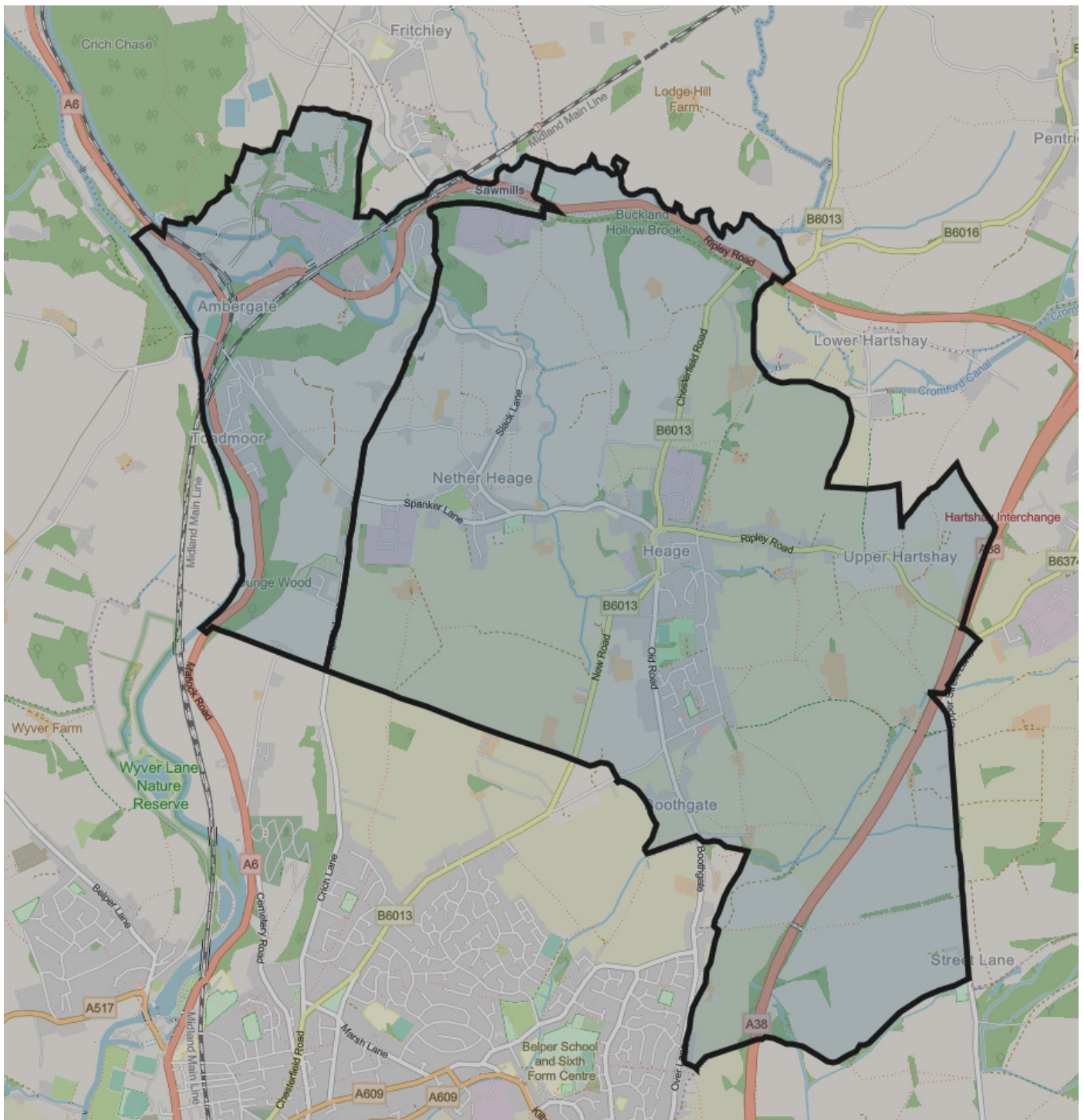
## Our Vision

After a very long time in vacancy, both parishes need pastoral care to nurture the active Christians and to encourage growth of our church communities. Our shared vision is 'Thy Kingdom Come' inspired by our diocesan vision as we seek to doing all that we can to encourage growth in our communities.

### **The key objectives and tasks needed to deliver our vision are:**

- To focus on discipleship and nurturing the existing congregation in their faith
- To encourage and foster lay training and develop the ministry teams including exploring vocations to authorised and licensed ministry
- To develop St Luke's work amongst schools
- To help the churches grow younger building on existing Sunday school and inter- generational worship
- To pioneer outreach amongst the new housing being built
- To develop missional pastoral work focussed around bereavement
- To begin serious conversations around a sustainable long-term shape of ministry and pastoral reorganisation across the Belper area
- To help us share the Word of God and demonstrate God's love in the community
- To help us develop our missional presence within our villages and their events
- To help us move to a position of financial sustainability and resilience





# The Benefice

The villages of Ambergate, Heage, Nether Heage and Sawmills lie to the north of the market town of Belper in the Diocese of Derby, Derbyshire, in the Amber Valley Borough Council area. The two parishes are scattered over the hills east of the Derwent Valley Mills, a World Heritage Site at the gateway to the Peak District.

Belper is a popular and lively town having a thriving high street with a strong variety of shops and supports a good range of community activities throughout the year.

St Luke's and St Anne's are situated in 2 villages to north of Belper Derbyshire and serve the villages of Heage, Nether Heage, Ambergate and Sawmills, as well as the Ridgeway and Riversdale communities.





# Ambergate

Ambergate has a population of 1459 and lies within the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site. It was an important location in the 18th and 19th centuries for the early pioneers of industrialisation. It is situated on the A6 as the road travels through the Derwent valley and the village is spread up the sides of the valley.

The combined population of Ambergate and Sawmills at the last census was 1628 and the development of fifty houses at Ridgeway and Riversdale between Ambergate and Sawmills has been completed. A further development of around 200 new houses is being built on old industrial land at Bullbridge, which is technically in the parish of Crich, but is very close to Sawmills. There is a good care home at the eastern edge of the parish.

There are a number of pubs, cafes, and caravan sites within the parish catering for the many visitors to the area and the local community, as well as established and developing businesses and tourist attractions both at the former wire-works site and along the adjacent A610 road connecting the A6 to the A38, including Lockwoods and J C Balls.

The church was built in 1894 as a classic late Victorian building with a single bell, some very good stained glass, including fragments of 14th century glass, a rood screen and chancel, a stone font and a World War 1 memorial that was originally destined for St Martin's church, Ypres, Belgium, but the church was destroyed in World War 1. It seats 110 and our Usual Sunday Attendance Figures for 2022 were 4 or 12 adults and 0 children.

Ambergate retains a community primary school in the village of 70+ pupils and this naturally serves as a focal point for many of the community activities. The school uses the church for a nativity performance each year and members of St Anne's congregation regularly Open the Book at the school. The school was rated Good by OFSTED in March 2017. There is an annual Village Carnival held in July and a Pantomime performed by local players in the church hall each February. The village cricket club thrives next to the church with junior as well as adult teams.

The church hall, underneath the church, has been prone to flooding on several occasions in the last 15 years, most recently in February 2022, but a faculty was obtained in 2022 to enable flood mitigation works to be carried out. These works are nearing completion and have been designed to minimise the risk of future flooding. The church hall is used for a variety of activities, including the pantomime, the wireworks art workshop, aerobics, as well as private functions.





# Heage

Heage has a population of 3141 and is situated to the east of Ambergate heading towards Ripley. It is made up of 2 parts Nether Heage and Heage itself which follows the main road running to Ripley. The combined villages have a population of approximately 4000, with a mix of old and new properties in both villages. There is currently a development of 34 dwellings on the former car park of the LB Plastics site, now known as the Firs Works, in Nether Heage and planning permission has been granted for 160 further dwellings on the Firs Works site itself.

The major business in Heage is the construction company, Bowmer and Kirkland and other small businesses include a few smaller firms, a small number of farms, several pubs, and a nursery (plants), but the majority of parishioners commute to Belper, Ripley, Derby, Nottingham and other nearby towns.

Heage also has its own popular (non C of E) Primary School approximately 150 pupils and members of St Luke's congregation regularly Open the Book at the school. There are two pre-school playgroups in the village.

One of the main eye-catching aspects of the village of Heage is the working restored flour mill, which stands on the skyline, was built by 1797, was restored to full working order in 2000 and is run by volunteers. There is a flower festival held at St Luke's each year which is matched by one held at the windmill at the same time, providing two very different venues.

There is an independently managed Village Hall next to the churchyard, which is used for a wide range of activities including play groups, exercise groups, as well as private functions.

There has been a place of worship in Heage since 1086. There has been an open churchyard since 1847 which is maintained by the local unpaid work team. The current building was built in 1646 and extended in 1836, with a faculty for a west-facing altar as well as the east-facing one in the original part of the church. The pews in the western end were replaced with chairs more recently to aid flexibility of use and worship styles. The Usual Sunday Attendance figures for 2022 were 12 adults and 3 children in a morning and 8 adults, 0 children in an evening.

# Church Life and Activity

We are willing to adapt for God's purposes – you will find an openness to discuss and act on new ideas and ways of being church and meeting people where they are in terms of their faith and spirituality. We are encouraging in Christian vocation and service and have maintained regular services even though clergy have not always been available at both churches.

Both our churches are welcoming and encouraging to new people coming into church through outreach activities, which include:

## Parish Visitors

- Open the Book sessions in both village schools
- Links to other community activities and events, including carnivals, WI, Scouts groups, motorcycle clubs, etc.

## St Luke's has run a number of activities in the past year:

- Flower Festival – involving village organisations and Heage Windmill
- Coffee Mornings – open to all
- Light and Hope service
- Harvest service, supporting "Hope for Belper"
- Nativity service, supporting Derbyshire Childrens' Holiday Centre at Skegness
- Carol services
- School Harvest and Carol services
- Christingle service supporting the Childrens Society.
- Online Bible study

## St Anne's activities have included:

- Supporting the Open Garden Scheme
- Links to a Wire Works Art project
- Annual Pantomime
- Harvest service, supporting "Hope for Belper"
- Supporting Ambergate Carnival each year, jointly with Ambergate Methodists.

## Both churches :

- Host School Nativity Services
- Have regular joint services with the Methodist churches in each village
- Hold Remembrance Sunday services.
- Use an unpaid work team to do regular work in the churchyard, including sowing a wild garden area at St Luke's
- Welcome animal companions and hold pet services

## Our Strengths

- Recognition that we cannot survive without a shared ministry.
- Determination to increase our congregation and maintain church services.
- Willingness to surrender to God's Love and His Will.
- Openness to ideas from all sources to develop our worship.
- Small number of committed church members.
- Established Sunday School at St Luke's.
- Some established community links and activities and access to church halls.

## Our Weaknesses

- Ageing congregation and the lack of younger members.
- A small, hard-working PCC at both churches, which are struggling to maintain the running of the church.
- Building challenges especially at St Anne's e.g., accessibility.
- Lack of parking adjacent to the church building, particularly at St Anne's.
- Impact of not having consistent clergy leadership.



# Current Pattern of services

	St Luke's	St Anne's
Week 1	9.30 Morning Worship 10.30 Sunday school 6.30 BCP Evensong	No service
Week 2	9.30 Morning Worship 10.30 Sunday school 6.30 BCP Evensong	9.30 Holy Communion or Morning Worship
Week 3	9.30 Holy Communion 10.30 Sunday school 6.30 BCP Evensong	No service
Week 4	9.30 Family service 6.30 BCP Evensong	9.30 Holy Communion or Morning Worship Joint with Methodist Church alternating venue
	6.30 BCP Holy Communion Once per month	

A range of services for special occasions take place across both churches:

- Ash Wednesday
- Good Friday – a service often led by laity
- Remembrance Sunday – a joint village service with members of the Royal British Legion and uniformed groups, led by the clergy or laity – this takes place at both churches
- Ambergate Primary School/ Heage primary school hold a Nativity service
- Christmas Eve – a Crib service held in the afternoon for parents and children is well attended
- Christmas Eve – a Midnight communion service is held with attendance of 30+

We use Mission Praise as our main source of hymns and are happy to sing both traditional and more modern hymns and songs. St Luke's has an organist/pianist and has a choir/singing group for special occasions. St Anne's has a regular pianist at most services. We have the option of using CDs in the event of no pianist being available.

## Finances/Buildings

A recent legacy has enabled the PCC at St Anne's to spend monies to upgrade the fabric of the Church Hall and maintain the church building which we hope will lead to increased rental income. As a result, over the last 2 years, expenditure has exceeded income and the balance sheet has been gradually reducing for several years.

2022	Ambergate	Heage
Common Fund Ask	7200	19283
Common Fund Paid	3000	6000
Total income	4356	19183
Total expenditure	4134	18542
Restricted reserves	1507	6839
Unrestricted reserves	8380	8061
Designated reserves	0	5635
Income from sale of St Mary Sawmill	48665	0



# The Vicarage

The Vicarage is a generous family home occupying a good sized plot with ample parking and a single garage and is located on a popular cul-de-sac at 7 Ashdene Gardens, Belper. Close to excellent schools and within walking distance of Belper town centre, this an attractive property in a convenient location.

This modern 4 bedroomed property is beautifully presented and includes two ensuite shower rooms, built in wardrobes, and a family bathroom. Downstairs consists of a lounge, dining room, study, kitchen, cloakroom, and hall with open porch. The vicarage benefits from upvc double glazing, gas central heating and a security alarm.

## How to apply

Thank you for reading this profile.

We very much look forward to hearing from you and will be happy to supply any further information you may need. If you have any specific questions or would value an informal pre-application conversation then please contact:

Ellie Ballard, Personal assistant to:

The Revd Canon Nicky Fenton, Acting Archdeacon of Derbyshire Peak and Dales

T: 01332 388675 E: [ellie.ballard@derby.anglican.org](mailto:ellie.ballard@derby.anglican.org)

The closing date for applications is: Friday 29 September 2023

Interviews will be held on: Friday 20 October 2023