

# Oxton St Saviour

Growing Together in Christ

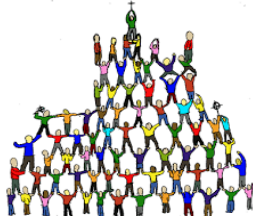


## Parish Profile

<https://www.oxtonstsaviour.co.uk>

Patron: The Diocesan Board of Patronage

# Welcome



We are a busy and lively church, welcoming people of all ages, ethnicity, gender and orientation. Rooted in the modern Catholic tradition, we affirm the ministry of all men and all women at every level in the Church. There are 336 parishioners on the Electoral Roll, and we are blessed to have many children and young families involved in church activities.

## Our Parish

**St Saviour's Oxtou** lies in the Wirral Peninsula, on the outskirts of Birkenhead. The Parish offers a mix of residential, commercial and retail properties. Old Oxtou is Victorian, with much inter-war housing. Since the 1960s there has been a huge expansion of both private and social housing in the Noctorum area.

**We can offer** a beautiful church building, adjoining a modern Parish Centre, a modern vicarage, and a skilled and committed congregation. In St Andrew's Church Centre, Noctorum, we have we have a well-maintained venue for worship and community activities.

**We would like** our new incumbent to lead our existing congregation, and to help us reach out and offer hope to a broken world, and to help us plan strategically for challenges of the future.

**We hope** to grow our new, mainly young congregation to mature faith, to continue our tradition of modern Catholic worship, and to remain a beacon of hope for all.

**We recognise** the economic challenges of maintaining a large, Victorian church, and the difficulties of declining church membership nationally. We know that difficult strategic decisions must be made with regard to energy consumption as we strive to be carbon neutral.

**We also recognise** that we do not always meet the high standards we aspire to.

# Our Vision

*'A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.'*

*Matt V: 14-16*

St Saviour's Church stands prominently on a hill, and can be seen for miles around, from well outside the parish. The top of the tower is the highest publicly accessible place on Wirral.

**Our Vision**, following the words in Matthew's Gospel above, is to be a visible statement of Christ's love for the World:

to welcome all;

to minister to all;

to lead all to faith,

and to fight for justice and equality for all, in the name of Jesus, who gave all, for everybody.



## Our Mission

Worshipping God in diverse ways:  
formal and elegant;  
informal and family-friendly.

Committed to sharing the Good News.  
Serving others in Christ's name.

*Everyone is Welcome!*

To achieve our mission, we must be a well-led, well-organised, and harmonious congregation who are generous with our time and our resources, and wise in how we deploy these assets in God's service.

# Our Location

The Wirral Peninsula, Oxton and Birkenhead

## The Wirral Peninsula

It is often said that Wirral represents the country in miniature, and with some justification.

Within the 8x5 miles of the peninsula can be found:

- the extremes of wealth and deprivation
- beautiful scenery and post-industrial squalor
- architectural grandeur and vernacular simplicity
- beautiful landscapes and industrial wastelands
- fine dining and food banks
- great museums, and schools without libraries
- wonderful seascapes, and industrial docklands
- offshore islands and offshore windfarms
- large housing estates, and villages from the Domesday Book
- excellent opportunities for leisure and recreation.

It has been branded '*The Leisure Peninsula.*'

Merseyside was in the forefront of Britain's industrial growth and remains industrialised to some degree. Deeside remained more residential, and increasing pollution drove the wealthy from Birkenhead to seek clean air from the Welsh hills. And so, the area provides every kind of challenge, and every kind of blessing. Consequently, its people are resilient, friendly, and welcoming.

It is a great place to live.

## Oxton

Oxton Village is synonymous with café culture during the day; bars, pubs and restaurants at night; high property prices (The Oxton Premium) and the famous Oxton Secret Gardens in the late Spring. Noted for large houses, sandstone walls and mature trees, it offers a pleasant aspect to the casual observer. However, in Wirral, you are never far from the realities of modern post-industrial life, and within the parish you will encounter all aspects of life in modern Britain, positive and negative.

## Our Diocese: Chester

Chester Diocese has a vision that we are 'Together in Christ, Sharing Hope,' and we do this by:

- Blessing the 1.5 million lives one at a time.
- Growing fuller, braver faith.
- Exercising transformative loving service.
- Engaging locally, working in partnership.

## Our Deanery: Birkenhead

St Saviour is one of ten parishes in the Birkenhead Deanery.

At present there is a considerable focus on the regeneration of Birkenhead with the Wirral Waters Project (supported by Chester Diocese) to transform 300 acres of brownfield waterfront into a vibrant, sustainable, mixed-use urban community. However, many of the town parishes in Birkenhead Deanery have extensive areas of deprivation. On the outskirts of Birkenhead, the parish of Oxton including Noctorum is more suburban and socially diverse with some areas of greater affluence.

The Rural Dean is Revd Paul Bentley (Birkenhead Priory), who is assisted by Revd Keith Addenbrooke.

## Our Bells

*A brief note on our bells*

We are the only ten-bell tower on the Wirral! We currently have ten ringers: four learners, and six more experienced ringers. Our youngest ringer is twelve years old. We are often joined by visitors from other towers eager to experience ringing on ten bells. Our Sunday morning ringing is enjoyed by the congregation and the community. We ring by arrangement for weddings and special events, and we welcome anyone who wishes to learn the art, and to keep our bells ringing into the future.

# Our Buildings

For every house is built by someone, but the builder of everything is God (Heb 3 v4)

## Parish Church

The Parish Church is a fine example of a large mid-Victorian Arts and Crafts building. It contains sumptuous wood carving and excellent stained glass. Several features, such as the folding reredos, and the four-angel altar, make it of great architectural interest. The church is in a good state of repair and stands in its own grounds. It has a large, private garden space in need of development, and has no graveyard.



## Parish Centre

The modern Parish Centre adjoins the original Church building. Sympathetic in design to the main church building, it was opened in 2005. It is fully accessible, thanks both to its design, and to the provision of a lift. It houses the Parish Office, a large kitchen and servery, and three meeting rooms of different sizes. The building is fairly energy-efficient and is in a good state of repair.



## St Andrew's Church and Centre

St Andrew's primarily serves the Noctorum Estate and is widely used by community groups. It contains a large versatile meeting room together with kitchen and servery and a smaller church space, seating approximately 70, with a separate vestry. It is a key community resource for the estate, and is home to a small but faithful congregation, which meets monthly for informal worship.



## Vicarage

The vicarage is a modern 4-bedroomed house, situated in a Close opposite the Parish Church. In addition to providing generous family accommodation, and a good-sized, private garden, it contains a large office/study for the incumbent. It is in a good state of repair.



# Our Parish Life

God is faithful, who has called you into fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. (1 COR 1 v9)



Easter Vigil Bonfire; 'My God is so Big!; Junior Church Christmas Window; Palm Sunday Procession; Glyn Mon Hughes playing the organ; Confirmation 2024; Harvest Festival decoration; Reading the Gospel; The Choir admit a new chorister; Wedding; All-age Service; Coronation Celebrations.

# Children and Families' Work



Tracey Williams is our Children's and Families' Leader. Her ministry is instrumental in the development of our young congregation. Tracey works closely with local schools and is Chaplain at St Saviour's Primary School. She also organises the team of volunteers who run Sand, Pebbles and Rocks as part of our Junior Church provision, and she leads Engage, a group for older children and teenagers. Tracey is very visible in the parish, often playing a key part in the 10:45am service, and she gets to know many of the parents and carers who attend this service.

We have a very strong children and families' ministry here at the Parish of Oxtou St Saviour. Firmly rooted in Christ, we are a welcoming church with strong community links celebrating and sharing God's love and growing faith.

Every first, second and third Sunday morning at 10:45am, we hold Junior Church sessions within the All-age service: **Sand** (all preschool children and one parent / carer); **Pebbles** and **Rocks** (primary school age children); and **Boulders**, (young people and adults, in church+6.) We hold an all-age service on the fourth Sunday at 10:45am. There were 4 baptisms and 9 confirmations last year.

**Engage**, our youth group, ('engaging with God and engaging with each other') meets every two weeks on a Sunday evening in term time. We have a very active group, ages ranging from 11-16. We have 12 young people on the register who regularly attend.

We hold nine **Messy Church** sessions during the year. Messy Church is Christ-centred and welcomes many families who do not regularly attend church on a Sunday. The sessions reflect the creativity of God through an imaginative, hands-on approach to being 'church together' and growing in faith. It is very intergenerational as we range from toddlers to year 6 children and our oldest volunteer is in her late 80s. It is a wonderful way to share faith with each other. The average attendance is 25 children.

**Stepping Stones**, our baby and toddler group was created in January 2024. This has proved an excellent addition to the provision we offer for young families, carers, grandparents etc. in our community. We have a regular attendance of 20+ children.

We also hold 'one off' events during the year: Messy Easter; Teddy Bear Sunday; Crib service; Holiday Club on Sunday mornings in the summer holidays; Christingle; and Light Parties. We encourage local schools, and organisations who use the parish centre to decorate the windows in church every Christmas. Building communities and Christian discipleship is so important within the life of the church and Tracey and her team of helpers are passionate about it. It equips us for faithfulness and it helps us to share our faith and God's love with others.



# Our Parish Primary School

## Oxton St Saviour's C of E Aided Primary School

We have excellent links with our parish school, which was founded in 1853 and rebuilt in 1967, within walking distance of the church. It has one form of entry, with 219 children aged 4-11 on roll as of July 2024. There are plans to open a nursery class soon. Currently a Voluntary Aided School, it is in the process of becoming a member of the Chester Diocesan Academy Trust. The Vicar is an ex-officio governor, and a majority of the Governing Body are appointed by the PCC through the Diocese.

Our Church's Children and Young Families' Leader, Tracey Williams, gives considerable time to the school in her role as Chaplain, leading Collective Worship and running the 'Next Gen' study group, which numbered 17 Year 6 and 9 year 5 pupils as of July 2024. A whole-school Messy Church Day was held in July, and it proved a wonderful exploration of God's love. Confirmation classes also take place in school. Our next Vicar will be expected to play an appropriate role in the life of the school, and the pupils' expectations are included in this profile: they are rather high, but please don't be put off! Perhaps more realistically, we agree with the staff, who hope that the new Vicar will be someone who enjoys being around children and can relate to them, will be a regular visitor, often lead worship and support the Chaplain in her work.

St Saviour's Primary School also holds many services in the Parish Church.

<https://www.oxtonstsavioursschool.com>



### Active Links with Other Local Schools

#### **Townfield School**

Mixed 5 – 11

**Townfield School** also uses the Parish Church for notable School services, such as Carol Concerts and end of term services.

#### **Birkenhead School**

HMC Independent, Mixed 3-18

**Birkenhead School** has its own Chapel and Chaplain but has historically close ties to the Parish. The Vicar is invited to preach at Sunday Chapel, and they hold large services in the Parish Church at the end of term.

#### **Prenton Preparatory School**

Independent, Mixed 3-11

**Prenton Preparatory School** also has close links to the Parish. Members of the PLT are frequently seen giving assemblies and talks, and the school holds several major services in the Parish Church each year.

#### **Ridgeway High School**

Maintained, Mixed 11-16

**Ridgeway High School** use the Parish Church on some significant occasions.

good story teller

smiley

chat t y

honest

happy

kind

brave

polit e

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THE CHILDREN AT  
OXTON ST SAVIOUR'S  
SCHOOL WOULD LIKE**

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under st anding

good sense of humour

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# Our Worshipping Community

What is it like to worship in our Church?

## Holy Eucharist at 9:15

The robed choir and servers lead the procession from the back of the nave. To the sound of the organ, you see the gospel, attended by its servers, read from the centre of the congregation. After the Sermon, the Peace and Notices, the focus is on our beautiful High Altar, where the timeless, poetic sacrament is carefully celebrated by priest, deacon and servers in their vestments, facing the congregation. Whether you receive at the High Altar, or in the Nave, you will feel the power of The Lord via a Eucharist firmly rooted in the modern Catholic tradition.

After the Blessing, the choir leads the Altar Party back down the nave, and the congregation move to the Parish Centre.

Come and meet us over refreshments. You will be very welcome.



## All-Age Service at 10:45

The murmur of voices, and the scurrying of feet welcomes you to this service. The portable altar sits at the crossing. Maybe we will be singing to the piano, or maybe The Worship Band are playing. You will sing a mixture of traditional and contemporary worship songs, and perhaps join in with the actions of some of our Junior Church songs. Children leave us for their groups, and the remaining adults listen to the sermon. Returning just before Communion starts, the children display their crafts, and share what they have been exploring. The adults also share their own explorations with the children.

After Communion, which is taken at the Crossing, there is the Blessing, and then we all go through for refreshments, and fellowship, and the families catch up with each other after their busy week, while their children play.

Our recent worship pattern (prior to vacancy) included:

BCP Holy Communion on Thursday morning and Eucharist on Tuesday evening.

Choral Evensong once a month; Worship @4 monthly at St Andrews;

Messy Church, during term-time; Messy Easter and Messy Christmas; Teddy Bear Sunday;

Morning Prayer in the Parish Centre;

A full series of Holy Week services; Advent and Carol services, and Christingle;

Midnight Eucharist on Christmas Eve:

We also celebrate many festivals such as Candlemas, Ascension Day, and Christ the King.

# Our New Vicar

Our new Vicar will be expected to be a minister of the Word; to celebrate the sacraments, and to lead our congregation so that its members may administer the grace of God to all they meet in their daily lives.

If that were not enough, they may also have any, or all, of the following attributes:

## Theology, Preaching and Teaching

- An able theologian who can bring revealed truth into dialogue to address contemporary issues.
- An engaging preacher who can articulate the Gospel in a way that challenges those who hear it.
- An enthusiastic teacher who can deepen the understanding of God's word and God's purpose.

## Ecclesiology

- Commitment to the modern Catholic tradition of Saviour's Parish Church.

## Leadership

- The ability to lead in a collegiate, generous manner with humility but with authority.
- Willingness to develop leadership potential at all levels within the congregation.
- An excellent role model for conflict resolution.
- Enjoy being part of a team and foster those qualities that enable a team to flourish.

## Pastoral Care

- Is approachable, easy to talk with, and a good listener.
- The ability to oversee and manage staff, seeking excellence, but with care and consideration.
- Ability to offer pastoral support to people of all ages and backgrounds in our Church family and beyond.
- A commitment to their own care and well-being with a keen awareness of the pressures on contemporary church leadership.

## Safeguarding

- Provide leadership on safeguarding, and encourage everyone to promote a safer church, and ensure the protection of the vulnerable in the church community.
- Lead in the promotion of a healthy, compassionate, and safe culture.
- With the PCC, oversee compliance with House of Bishops' Safeguarding Guidance and Code of Safeguarding Practice.

## Social Engagement

- Have the ability to bring the Light of Faith into dialogue with political and social issues.
- Be a voice for justice, accountability and reconciliation.
- Be a champion for the young, the powerless, the marginalised and the excluded.
- Competence to engage effectively through a variety of media.

## Church Development

- Has a deep commitment to, and experience of, working with children and young people, in Church and school settings.
- Work with others to ensure resources are used wisely and in a way that is consistent with our mission, and to restore our contribution to world mission.
- Provide strategic direction and work with the PCC to evolve a Parish development Plan which ensures the financial viability, and evolution of the Parish.
- Be a visible and willing presence at Church social activities.

It is easy to compile a wish list like the one above. And it is easy to feel unequal to it. However, if you feel that God might be calling you to our parish, the words of *1 Thess. 5:4* might be appropriate:

*“He who has called you is faithful, and He will do it.”*

# Finance

The annual Accounts for 2023 are attached to this profile. Our income from all sources was £178,953, (which included a bequest of £20,000) and expenditure was £180,471. There are five lay people on the payroll, all of them part-time, although our Children and Young Families’ Leader is paid for 30 hours per week. Like most churches since the pandemic, we face some challenges, but the PCC has started work on a 10 Year Financial Plan, which will be formalised with the new Vicar, involving resources released from the sale of a property.

A large finance committee works with the Treasurer to oversee parish finances and reports regularly to the PCC. There is a separate fund-raising Committee.



*The view Eastward from our Church Tower. Visible are: The Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ The King; Liverpool Anglican Cathedral; The River Mersey; Cammell Laird Shipbuilders; the leafy canopy surrounding Oxton Village.*