



Parish Profile



Welcome to our parish

Thank you for considering St Peter's Elworth as a place where God may wish you to serve during the next stage of your ministry.

In the following pages we have aimed to capture who we are, what we do and where we might journey to next with your leadership.





Introduction

St Peter's is a flourishing, evangelical church in Elworth near Sandbach in Cheshire. We are blessed with many hard-working, committed members who are focused on the work of the church in sharing the gospel with our local community.

Our numerous activities seek to show God's love to our neighbours and we have developed a very close association with the C of E primary school linked to the church. Our church vision is to worship God by proclaiming the Gospel, promoting growth, serving others and leading people into a personal relationship with Jesus.


We need a new vicar who will continue to develop and steer our vision and will accompany and encourage us in making our vision a reality. They will celebrate and support those areas which are working well and help to rejuvenate, re-focus or even replace those which require a fresh direction.



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Identity & Vision

About St Peter's

Our vision

We are committed in love to worshipping God

- by proclaiming the Gospel in word and action
- by promoting growth
- by serving others
- by leading people into a personal relationship with Jesus



About St Peter's

Our Parish

St Peter's Church is located in the parish of Elworth to the west of Sandbach. The population has increased recently to over 9000 due to significant housing developments.

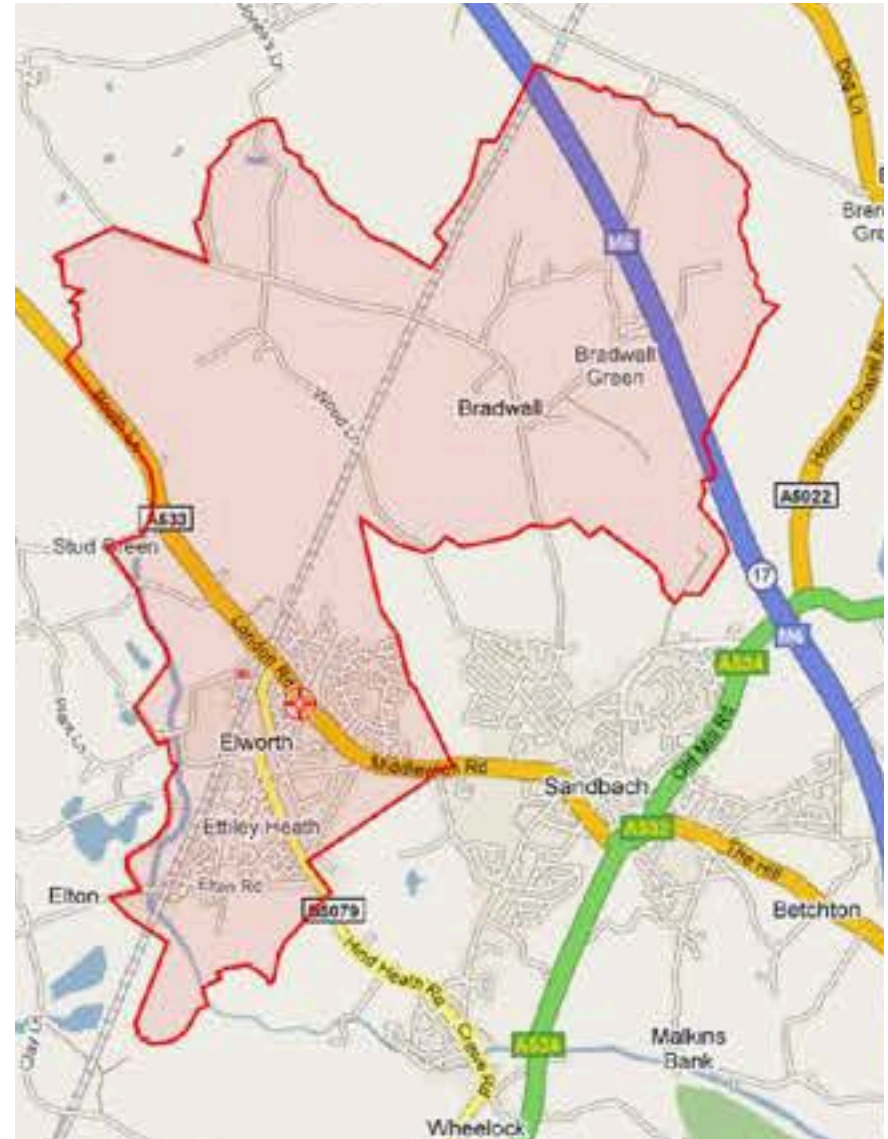
Elworth and Sandbach are seen as desirable commuter locations for those working in Staffordshire and the northwest. This is the result of our close proximity to the M6 and good rail connections.

St Peter's is a local church that is a family of people of all ages committed to Jesus Christ as the only son of God our Lord and Saviour.

As the parish church for Elworth we recognise a responsibility to make Christ known to all the people of the parish and serve the needs of all all those who look to it for help.

St Peter's is a friendly and welcoming church and a focal point of the local community with a well-used church hall.

St Peter's has strong lay leadership (with the benefit of an associate minister) who all look forward to sharing and growing under the leadership of the vicar.



Our Team

Anthony Rigby
Associate Minister



I'm married to Tracy with two children and several pets. A chemist by profession, I work full-time managing a laboratory. I have been a member of the St Peter's family since 2005. I was ordained in 2020 and, having been the curate here, I am now the Associate Minister. I want our church to serve others, grow in faith, proclaim the gospel and encourage others to grow in faith also.

Steve Coppenhall
Lay Reader



I'm Steve, married to Helen, one of our Churchwardens. I have attended St. Peter's for over 40 years, and have been a lay reader since 2007, licensed to both St Peter's and St. Leonard's, Warmingham. I regularly attend the 6pm service, either leading or as a member of the robed choir.

Paul Savvides
Lay Reader



I have attended St Peter's since the 1990's where I first became a Christian. I'm involved in the children and youth work, worship group and also lead a bible study group. I'm a procurement manager by profession and am married to Heather. I long to see Jesus' words come alive in Elworth as we serve our community.



Our Team

Helen Coppenhall

Churchwarden



I'm married to Steve, mother to Martyn, who is married to Jen, and a grandmother to Lucas. I have previously been a churchwarden at St Peter's, re-taking the role this year after a six year break. I have attended St Peter's for many years, being baptised, confirmed and married here. I am most often seen in the robed choir at our 6pm service where I also take an active role on the reading and prayer rota.

Steve Parfitt

Churchwarden



I'm married to Pat, retired and both a father and grandfather. I took up the churchwarden role five years ago. I sing and play guitar in the worship group and am involved in producing our YouTube content, streaming some services and other online events. I want to see the spirit move in our congregations and an increase in our outreach to the wider community.

Cathryn Houghton

Children & Family Lead



I'm married to yet another Steve (!) and have 2 grown up daughters. I have served as Children and Families lead for eleven years and for the last four have extended this role to serve as the Primary School chaplain at Elworth School. Through a whole spread of groups from Baby group to Youth Hub, I hope to show the love of God to those I meet.



Safeguarding at St Peter's

Safeguarding is about building a healthy culture within our church that encourages honesty and openness, where, for example, every individual is respected, valued and nurtured, where each individual is allowed to ask questions and disagree in a safe and respectful manner and where leaders are nurturing and nurtured.



It is also shown when safeguarding practice is embedded in every part of the organisation, in every activity and for all age groups. The safeguarding officers meet together regularly to look at the systems that we have in place so that we take care of everyone, consider others, protect the weak and the vulnerable – and have a heart for the wellbeing of all of God's creation. We encourage everyone at St. Peter's to be vigilant with respect to safeguarding concerns, however insignificant they may seem, so that together we can show that we are committed to recognising that safeguarding is central to our faith.

I'm Helen Jones and I am the Safeguarding Lead and work alongside Cathryn Houghton in this vital role within the Church. I have various other roles, including leading the All Age team and have been a part of the Church family for over 40 years.

I have recently retired from my role as a Pre-school Manager after 33 years at Elworth Pre-school Group. I am married to Phillip – we have two daughters, a son-in-law and two wonderful grandchildren. I am looking forward to seeing what God has planned for me in this new phase of my life.



The Church Buildings

A 19th CENTURY CHURCH



St Peter's is a medium-sized church built in 1846 and marked the establishment of a new Elworth parish. It has a seating capacity of about 150 on traditional pews (although more have squeezed in for major services at Christmas!) There is a modern AV unit which uses a retractable screen and a video camera system. The organ is electronic but the "historic" pipes have been retained as a feature.

Considering its age, the building is in good condition. A quinquennial Inspection is due but no major work is anticipated.

There are 2 small vestries, one used by the service leader and the other by the choir and for a retreat when needed for parents with small children.



The Church Buildings

CHURCH HALL



The new hall was opened in early 2012 at a cost of £1.3million after the previous building was severely damaged by fire in early 2010. The building provides a superb facility for outreach and community use featuring exterior and interior de-fibrillator units.

A large hall can be divided in two and is equipped with AV and camera facilities. It is used for our 10:30 modern worship family service every Sunday and can seat 200. As well as worship it is used for other activities such as Messy Church and holiday clubs.

There is a fully equipped kitchen, a specifically designed pre-school facility, office, small prayer/meeting room and an upstairs room. The foyer is furnished with cafe-style tables and chairs providing a welcome space for refreshments, meeting people between Sunday services and for a weekly Coffee and Company Cafe.



An Eco-friendly Church

Following the failure of our old gas boiler, the decision was made to renew the church heating system in line with the national Church's stated aim of carbon neutrality by 2030. The congregation is now kept warm by a fully electric under-pew heating system.





Worship

Regular Pattern of services



9:00 a.m. in Church

On the first and third Sundays of the month, the Church is open for private prayer and contemplation.

On the second and fourth Sundays, the organ pipes ring out for Holy Communion.

10:30 a.m. in the Hall

Contemporary service that is accessible to all ages with a worship group and a more audio/visual encounter. Children's groups and a crèche run in parallel and every month there is an All Age service.

6:00 p.m. in Church

At 6.00 p.m. our services alternate between Evening Prayer and Holy Communion usually taken from the Book of Common Prayer with a robed choir and organ music.



Our Hong Kong Community

As part of the Welcome Network established by UKHK, St Peter's plays a significant role in offering support to recent arrivals from Hong Kong. Over the past three years the Hong Kong community at St Peter's Church has experienced sizeable growth expanding from just a family of three to over 40 members. This vibrant and dynamic group has become an integral part of our church family contributing greatly to our varied and inclusive community.

Our new members from Hong Kong have expressed feeling well supported and warmly welcomed. To ensure their spiritual needs are met, we offer a Cantonese version of the sermon on our YouTube Channel following each Sunday's 10:30 service. This effort helps our Hong Kong members fully understand the word of the Lord. Additionally, to encourage the Hong Kong community within and outside of the church family to be actively involved in church activities, we print flyers and posters in both English and Chinese. This bilingual approach facilitates better communication and inclusion, forging closer bonds within the church family.

The growth and active participation of our Hong Kong community reflects the welcoming and supportive environment of Saint Peters Church. We are committed to continuing this support, celebrating the cultural diversity that enriches our congregation.



Home Groups

Strengthening Faith



- Home groups are a central part of our fellowship at St Peter's. They provide an opportunity to make friends, grow in faith and support each other in a smaller setting than the Sunday services.
- Groups are informal, friendly and supportive, providing an ideal setting to meet together, including discussions about applying God's word to our lives and a time of prayer.
- Groups have a relaxed feel and meet on a weekly or fortnightly basis. Meeting times vary as do the numbers in each group.
- We are convinced of the value of the fellowship we share in these groups.



A Church for all

We are committed to be open and accessible to all.

All are to be welcomed in the church and to membership and leadership roles.

Step-free access is available to the hall and church.

A hearing aid induction loop is installed in both the hall and church.

There is an accessible toilet in the hall.



Community Groups

Our Church Hall is also home to the following organisations:

- Brownies
- Elworth Pre-School
- Elworth Over 60s
- Rainbows
- U3A groups
- Slimming World
- Repair Cafe
- Happy Little Signers
- Diabetes Prevention
- Alheimers Society
- Watercolour Class
- Cheshire Constabulary PCSOs
- Cheshire East Council Surgery





my lighthouse
my lighthouse

WAR

Church Life



Our Church

WHAT KEEPS US BUSY

A lively community needs an energetic church.

From regular groups that keep the wheels turning to teams that carry out specific tasks, there are many people involved in church-led activities. Some of these activities are done in partnership with other village organisations.



Our Young People

Sunday Groups



Acorns for ages 3-6 years and Adventurers for ages 6-11 are the Junior Church groups that meet during the 10:30 family services.

Messy Church



Fun-filled sessions with activities, food and fellowship for primary aged children and their families.

ABC



ABC takes place on Thursday mornings offering soft play, toys, craft role play and song time for toddlers and their parents/carers. Due to the popularity of the group we introduced 2 sessions!



Our Young People

Baby Group



Aimed at babies under 12 months, the baby group meets in the church hall. Toys and soft play are provided along with refreshments.

Lego Church



*We need you!
to engage with our youth and
childrens worker to nurture and
develop our thriving ministry to
parents and children*

Friday Evening



We offer two clubs for young people during term time. Both clubs are thriving and share Jesus with our younger generation in a fun and engaging way.



Our Young People

School Chaplain
Cathryn Houghton



The role of School Chaplain at Elworth CE School is one which is distinctive and inclusive; meeting people where they are and accepting them unconditionally providing the essence of God's love to the whole school community. The chaplaincy role is completely relational and depends upon the building of good relationships with local families. The School Chaplain is always on the edge and in the centre providing a listening ear where and when it is needed, checking-in with children, staff and parents alike.

Chaplaincy includes the planning of both class and collective worship and prayer, the development and leadership of the school Worship Warrior team of children and the planning and leadership of the school's Christian Values Projects. It involves praying regularly for and with the whole school community.

The role of a chaplain is diverse and varied; always different from day to day but with God at the centre always.





Elworth Cof E School Chaplaincy

Elworth CE primary school has a strong and valued relationship with St Peter's and is well supported by the church. Five years ago the Vicar and I appointed a Chaplain who was and is the church's Children's and Families Leader. This enabled the Christian work in school and church to become one mission and joined together the thinking in both organisations. There has been a joined up approach to planning and ministering to children both at Elworth and at St. Peter's through the collaborative working of the Chaplain. Her role is as my spiritual deputy and part of the ministry team further enhances the links between the clergy and the school and the Christian message of the school.

I would hope the new incumbent would further support this relationship between church and school and attend worship at least weekly and be involved in a host of opportunities to develop the spirituality of the children. The partnership between Headteacher, Vicar and Chaplain supports the daily Christian worship, daily morning prayers, Prayer Space days, Christian special events such as: Advent, Christmas, Easter, Pentecost and Remembrance.

The Vicar is an active member of the full governing board of the school and is also Vice Chairperson. He advises on the Christian Distinctiveness of the school and helps the governing body prioritise faith and ethos in decision making. Working closely as a senior leadership and a clergy we have grown together serving our community more effectively.

We very much look forward to welcoming our new incumbent and continuing this successful relationship.

Neil Garratt

Headteacher



Some of Our Activities

Coffee & Company



Football



Supper Night



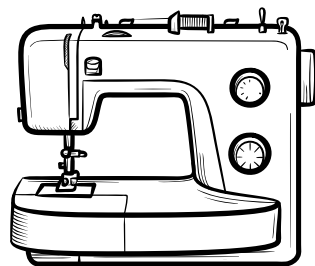
Churchyard Team



Book Group



Sewing Machine Group



Speak



Flower team



Prayer Life

Prayer is central to our fellowship and, as well as encouraging individual prayer and bible study, we seek to provide opportunities to join in prayer together.

All of our services include a time of prayer for local, national and international needs.

In addition to our Sunday services, we also have a prayer meeting each month for the whole church to meet and pray together.

Be it the monthly church prayer meeting or at a home group, a prayer team after services or an email network of believers, prayer for everybody is available at St Peters.

Prayer underpins all we do.



Pastoral Care

Nursing and Residential Homes

Within our Parish we have three Residential/Nursing Homes into which we are welcomed. We join with the residents at each once a month for a short service of worship and to celebrate the festivals. It's an opportunity to reconnect with familiar local and church families and we have made some delightful friendships, not only with residents, but also with staff, lifestyle managers and activity coordinators.



Michelle Walker is one of our pastoral workers.

Home visits and a 'phone call are very welcoming to those within our church family who are housebound so they can still feel involved in church life and part of the wider church family. They also provide an additional ministry through prayer which is very special.





Opportunities for Growth

Where we are now

We have an electoral roll of 149.

The demographic of the congregation is broadly the same as that of the parish – Sunday attendance at the morning and evening services tends to be more mature adults whilst the 10:30 service sees a much more diverse age range from children to retirees.

Due to the heating failing in church in 2021 we moved all our services into the hall. Whilst the “traditional” services have now moved back into the church, we maintain the family service in the hall and numbers have now increased to around 100 every Sunday.

The tradition of the church could be described as Evangelical and within the congregation several traditions can be found. We are aware that we need to cater for a wide range of styles and approaches to both worship and understanding of God. Our traditional and modern buildings enable us to offer this range of services.



Where are we going?

Our Mission Plan

The screen is blank!

We need to develop a viable action plan to more effectively deliver our vision to proclaim the Gospel to Elworth, promote growth in the church and ourselves, serve others and lead people into a personal relationship with Jesus.



We need you!
*Can you help us bring focused
direction for the next five years,
or more?*



Responding to change

Our prayers for the next 5 years

- To encourage a greater willingness of all church members to engage in everyday church life
- To grow discipleship across all three services
- To improve finances to enable a full leadership team including a full-time employed assistant minister (50% achieved so far)
- To maintain and build on a mission that is based on orthodox Bible teaching within the C of E
- To commence events aimed at couples and young parents
- To re-start enrichment activities such as walks and quizzes
- To start a programme of events aimed specifically at men



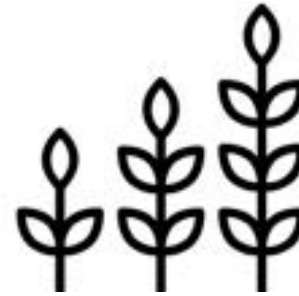


Who we're looking for

We're looking for a vicar who will....



...seek new opportunities to minister to the ever-growing community of Elworth



...continue our tradition of Biblical teaching with practical application, to enable us to continue to grow in faith and action



... look at how we move forward as a church family, balancing the traditional and liturgical with the contemporary and spontaneous



...continue to build on and strengthen the links with Elworth CofE School; the children, families and staff



...encourage and foster an excellent safeguarding culture within the parish



...partner with, support, and encourage the staff team and lay members alike to develop and use their gifts in various ministries



...be spirit-led and servant-hearted, seeking God's will and ambition for us as a church and in the world



We're looking for a vicar who is able to....



...listen, be understanding, approachable, and responsive to the needs of both church and community



...be prepared for likely population increase through new housing developments



...be prepared for our church to engage with the work of the Holy Spirit



...strengthen our finances so we can afford an assistant minister



..be open to development and new directions, enabling us to be courageous



...be bold and imaginative in developing liturgy as a channel for multi-generational worship



Our vicar will be someone who...

- has a conservative view of the Bible as the Word of God and who aims to present the age-old truths of the Gospel in ways appropriate to the present generation.
- has a real concern for winning people to a genuine faith in Christ but who at the same time is committed to pastoral care and spiritual nurture of all age groups within the parish.
- builds a sense of community, embracing the whole parish, not just the Church congregation.
- will recognise, develop and use the abilities of Church members in the mission of St Peter's.
- will be spirit-led and servant-hearted, seeking God's will and ambition for us as a church and in the world.



Finance

- St Peter's is blessed to be in a stable financial position. A high level of giving from the congregation totalled £116k in 2023 which was a little down on the 2022 figure. Donations can be made by standing order, cash or envelopes, QR codes or by contactless means.
- In 2022/3 we invested from reserves to increase our provision in youth and children's work. This led to a budget deficit in those years. However the 2024 budget looks set to be in surplus. We are £5.8k under budget for the 2024 financial year so far. (June '24 figures)
- Other income from such items as hall lettings, chaplaincy fees from the school and FIT receipts raised the 2023 income to £174k in 2023.
- Major outgoings are staff salaries, PAYE and pension contributions and the parish share which this year amounts to £75k per annum which is fully paid each month.
- Our current account as at August 2024 stands at £21k and £153k is held on deposit.
- Our budget for 2024 is £181k



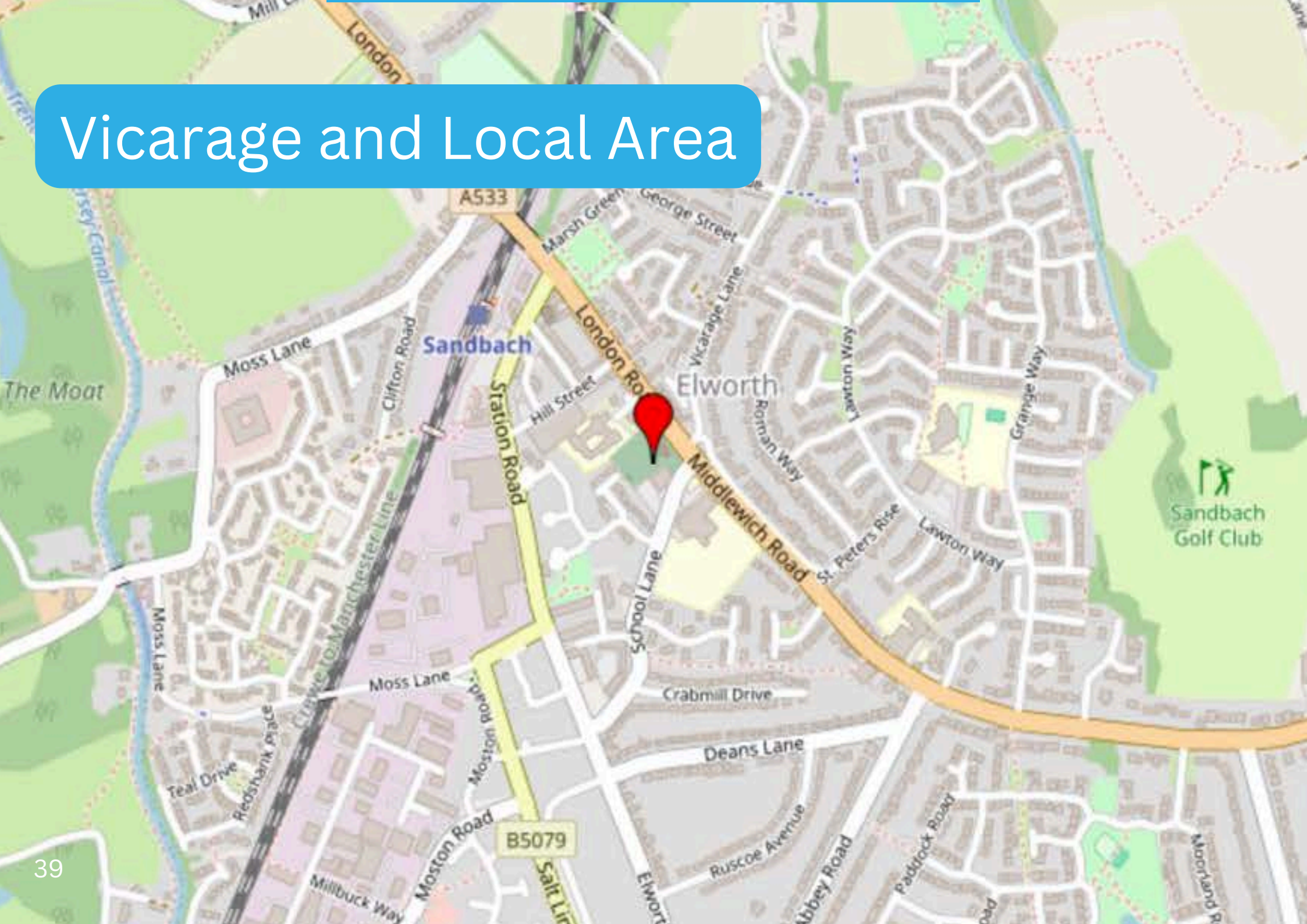
Looking Wider

St. Peter's donates 10% of its voluntary income to local, national and overseas good causes. We also support them by prayer and practical means. The following are those that benefit:

Tearfund
Sandbach Food Bank and Pantry
Children's Society
Prison Fellowship
Operation Christmas Child
Slavic Gospel Association
Compassion UK
SYCAM (Indian orphanage)
Bible Society
Scripture Union
Barnabas Fund
WaterAid
Christian Vision for Men



Vicarage and Local Area



The Vicarage



The vicarage is situated about a ten minute walk from the church in an established residential area. Downstairs it has ample living space including an office, whilst upstairs there are four bedrooms, the master having an en-suite bathroom.



GROUND FLOOR
APPROX. FLOOR
AREA 1020 SQ. FT.
(94.4 SQ. M.)



1ST FLOOR
APPROX. FLOOR
AREA 736 SQ. FT.
(68.1 SQ. M.)



Our Location

Elworth is located in the county of Cheshire to the south west of Manchester. In times past it was a village in its own right but following urban expansion it is now effectively a suburb of the town of Sandbach the centre of which is approximately one mile away.

The M6 passes to the east of the town and Junction 17 serves as the exit for Sandbach and Elworth. Sandbach railway station is in the parish which provides links directly north to Manchester and south to Crewe. With these excellent communication links, Elworth and Sandbach are seen as desirable commuter locations for those working in Staffordshire and the northwest.

Old factory sites are now a number of new housing developments in the area. There are 2 primary schools in the parish, Elworth Hall and Elworth CE.

The centre of Sandbach features several pubs, cafes and coffee shops. Independent shops predominate but well-known retailers have a presence in the town. The town square features the Sandbach Crosses - two large Saxon stone crosses dominating the cobbled market square. They are elaborately carved with Biblical scenes including the Nativity and the Crucifixion.

Located within the parish there is only one other church – Elworth Methodist Church. However, in Sandbach itself there are numerous other churches; the parish church of St Mary’s, a Roman Catholic church, another Methodist church, a Baptist church and a small number of “independent” churches.

Church Urban Fund data shows the population of the parish as 9125. It ranks 10525/12239, where 1 would be the most deprived parish. This means that the parish is among the wealthiest in the country. The area is an attractive and, it has to be said, a relatively affluent one. The parish population is predominately white British. That said, a growing number of families from Hong Kong have joined us and form a welcome and growing part of our congregation and the PCC.



That’s not the vicarage!



A taste of Sandbach High Street



Leisure Facilities



Sandbach Leisure Centre
Gym, sports hall & swimming pool



Pleasant Canal Walks



Sandbach Rugby Club



Sandbach Football Club



Elworth Cricket Club



Sandbach Golf Club



St Peter's Church Elworth Contact Details

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