

St Andrew Kettleburgh

Like every village body the church could do with more support either by people attending services or from financial support by those who value its historical legacy, and beauty as an ancient building at the heart of the village.

The church community is very small but devoted, and in addition there are people from Wickham Market who regularly attend Choral Evensong. I have enjoyed, am still enjoying getting to know people, names and faces, and support village activities when other commitments allow. Having 7 parishes in my care you will realise that it is impossible for me to be 'in parish' as much as I would wish.

My 7 parishes are in the process of 'coming together' as the South Loes Benefice, sharing me, and worship with the congregations from the other six parishes. These joint services have a loyal following, and are occasions on the first Sunday each month where 50/60 people gather to worship together. Week three and five each month have a similar pattern of joint services, and currently St Andrew's has a service on week 2 and 4 each month.

These combined services are, in my view, the way to growth especially in small rural villages, but despite the good attendances at the united services many people still remain focussed on their 'home' parish, and it is this that will be difficult to sustain in the long term. We have 7 beautiful, unique church buildings, and we will continue to use all of them, but the Church isn't just a building, Church is all about people, people in community. And in order for us to be an active church, spreading the good news of Jesus Christ, reaching out to people in need we need grow together.

St Andrew's is most fortunate to have two extremely hardworking, experienced Churchwardens, and I thank John and Valerie for all they do to keep St Andrews cared for and 'open for business'. There is also a good team of Lay Elders working across all 7 parishes, all of whom lead services regularly. There are 4 retired clergy who also provide an invaluable service to the parishes and for this I am most grateful.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) are still working hard to improve disabled access and to provide toilet facilities, this is a project which has been many years in the planning, but they are hopeful it will soon be underway

The Revd Deirdre West

Priest in Charge.