

Numbers behind our shared life in the North Cotswolds

Information about the North Cotswolds Deanery - and taking into account clergy numbers, lay leadership, geography, demographics, finances etc.

Some themes and shared experiences (not uniform):

- our average Vicar is serving 5.5 church buildings and 4.6 PCCs;
- it is getting harder to find volunteers for PCC roles;
- lay and clergy leaders are increasingly stretched with an increasing administrative burden - time, energy and finances are being exhausted on keeping the structures (e.g. PCCs, rotas, building) going.

Current statistics for the North Cotswolds:

Number of Church Buildings:	71
Number of Parishes:	60
Number of Benefices:	11
Number of Incumbent status posts:	14
Population:	38,000 (in 2011)

Population

Eight parishes have populations with over 2,000 people; the remaining parishes are generally small villages. Most of the larger settlements are along the Fosse Way or in the north of the Deanery.

There has been significant movement in population (the Census 2021 data has not yet been released and in some areas the 2011 data is well out of date). Some parishes have experienced significant new housing including; Bourton on the Water, Little Rissington, Moreton in Marsh and then a large part of the north of the Deanery (Mickleton, Pebworth, Honeybourne, Quinton, Meon Vale and Long Marston). If all the planned building goes ahead, it is anticipated that the population of the Deanery will rise to 60,000 (up 50%) – with most of this being resident in the top third geographically.

Church Attendance

Most parishes are part of benefices with a Usual Sunday Attendance of over 100.

Education

Most children 4-11 attend a Church of England Primary School. These schools are generally strongly embedded within their local church communities.

The great majority of our young people aged 11-18 attend one of two secondary schools, i.e., the Cotswold School and Chipping Campden School. These are significant places of meeting and gathering – both for young people and families. Both schools have leisure centres and theatres. Some teenagers study elsewhere (Cheltenham, Evesham and Stratford and attend Grammar Schools).

Church Finance

Most parishes belong to benefices which do not regularly meet the Parish Share target. The parishes of the North Cotswolds do not cover the cost of the clergy deployed to serve them.

There is a need to encourage better stewardship and strengthen willingness to make generous parish share commitments, whilst also recognising the financial pressures all parishes are facing. Running expenses and maintenance costs are increasing and there is a desire to be more outward facing and support outreach and missional endeavours and projects.

In 2021: (of the 51 parishes who had submitted their returns)

- 26 parishes (51%) had an end of year deficit
- 7 parishes had deficits for 3 consecutive years or more)
- 22 parishes (43%) had reserves totalling over £50,000.