



The Church in Wales:

A small guide to a big picture



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This small and simple guide has a big purpose: to let you know about the active presence of the Church in Wales today. You might be surprised at some of the facts and figures! Importantly, it also spells out some of the challenges the Church in Wales faces at the very heart of Welsh communities. It shows our aspirations for the future and our hope to work with you to achieve them.

Who we are

Since 1920, the Church in Wales has been an independent Province within the world wide Anglican Church. The Church in Wales continues the tradition of Anglican worship and life within Wales. It has a presence in every community in Wales.

The Church in Wales works closely with the Welsh Assembly Government and other agencies for the benefit of the people of Wales. It is involved in national and international issues.

Organisation

The Church in Wales is led by its Bishops and overseen by a Governing Body consisting of Bishops, and mainly elected clergy and church members.

Your local parish is run by a parish priest, its churchwardens and Parochial Church Council (PCC) consisting of volunteer members of the congregation. Parishes (there are 959 of them) are clustered into area deaneries which make up a

diocese. We have six dioceses in Wales, each led by a bishop. They are St Asaph, Bangor, St Davids, Llandaff, Monmouth, and Swansea & Brecon. The Archbishop of Wales is the Bishop of one of the dioceses and has additional national responsibilities.

The property of the Church in Wales is owned by a central trustee body (the Representative Body of the Church in Wales) but managed locally through diocese and parish. The Representative Body administers financial matters including pensions and investments as well as providing professional assistance and guidance.

Dioceses also hold some property in their own right and organise church schools in their area as well as a host of other activities including social responsibility projects.



What we believe

The Church believes in God as a loving creator, redeemer and inspirer.

The love of God is revealed uniquely in the person of Jesus of Nazareth and can be found in all people.

The values which flow from our beliefs mean that the Church in Wales:

- Cares about the things that really matter in people's lives
- Has a presence and purpose in every part of Wales through its parishes
- Works with and for people in communities and organisations within that parish area and beyond
- Is actively involved in local needs and opportunities and the wellbeing of people
- Encourages new kinds of involvement through social projects and partnerships
- Opens and shares its buildings for wider community use
- Welcomes people from whatever background and age in its worship and activities
- Responds to people's spiritual needs at times of great importance and change in their lives
- Provides primary, secondary and tertiary education with a distinctive Christian character

What we do

From churches and cathedrals to chaplaincy and congregations; from marriages to membership; from housing to homelessness; from families to famine relief; from Abbey Cwmhir to Ystradyfodwg, the Church in Wales plays its full part locally and internationally. We are about activity and aspiration, community and commitment, presence and partnership. The following sections reveal aspects of the Church's activities which will leave you saying: **I didn't know that...**

Church buildings

1,430

places of worship including cathedrals, parish churches, and chapels

29%

of the Grade 1 listed buildings in Wales are Church in Wales churches. Two-thirds of our churches are listed buildings

2,000,000

people visit our churches and cathedrals each year

£70 million

is the estimated cost of repair to our listed buildings over the next five years

Each of our churches is managed by local volunteer members of the church congregation. They are responsible for the maintenance and repair of each church including fundraising.

We take the care of our churches very seriously. We operate a system for overseeing work to our buildings (called faculty procedure) based on professional and expert advice. Every church is formally inspected by a qualified architect every five years.

As well as being places of worship, and venues for weddings (3,538 in 2007), baptisms (8,170 in 2007) and funerals, churches and cathedrals are vital heritage buildings. They are important visitor destinations and places of pilgrimage which we keep open as regularly as possible. They often host unique collections of art and local history; churches promote music and the arts and are centres of community life.

There is a continuing challenge to fund these vital community assets.



The Cloisters at St David's Cathedral, Pembrokeshire – our most visited Cathedral and a place of pilgrimage for generations.

Open for all

350

church halls and parish rooms

15,000

**sessions of community use of buildings
each week in Church in Wales buildings**

160,000

**people use our buildings each month
for community activities**

30%

**of community uses of church buildings
involve young people**

Whilst the church hall is often the place for community activities, increasingly churches are being adapted to provide for a wide range of activities e.g meeting rooms, cafés, crèches, social clubs, surgeries, exhibitions and galleries.

The church can be a focal point for community cohesion – a place where people are welcomed, involved and valued.

We want our churches to be places of joy and hope with flexible and imaginative programmes and activities.

The church is increasingly the last public building left in a community and it plays a key role in helping to inspire and transform communities and congregations.



St Matthew's Church, Swansea – the church has been divided into a worship area and a resource centre for disadvantaged people (operated by Cyrenians Cymru).

Community activity

160

staff employed to run Social Responsibility projects

3,000

volunteers helping with these projects

8,000

individuals helped by our projects

£2.5 million

investment in communities through our projects

Through crèches and after school clubs, disability groups and arts projects to senior citizens luncheon clubs, I.T. and parenting classes, local churches are contributing positively to the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities across Wales.

Thousands of volunteers from our congregations lead and support community groups as carers, listeners, reconcilers, advocates, mentors, coaches, friends, supporters, funders, helpful pairs of hands, loving hearts...

Our Social Responsibility projects, organised by each diocese in the disadvantaged areas of Wales, work with vulnerable people, building confidence and esteem, teaching new skills, supporting the longer term prevention of social problems such as crime, substance misuse, unemployment, poor parenting and poverty,

This is the Church in Wales in action.



Children learning through play at Little Sunbeams, Swansea – a childcare project run by the Diocese of Swansea and Brecon.

Places to live

Sites

for affordable housing have been created and are being investigated

Homelessness

initiatives to offer help and support

Partnership

we work closely with others on housing issues

695

houses for parish priests

We are concerned about the need for more affordable housing in Wales. We have a number of successful schemes already built on our land with more planned.

We work to alleviate homelessness through outreach projects in urban and rural areas such as flats for single parents, shelters and street support.

We work closely with Local Authorities, Welsh Assembly Government, Shelter Cymru and Community Housing Cymru to develop strategies to address housing issues.

Our parish priests are provided with houses so they can live within the communities they serve. We let a number of houses and seek to ensure proper standards of accommodation.



St John's Church, Hafod, Swansea – this church was converted (by Tai Cartrefi) to provide ten flats for the elderly as well as retaining an area for worship.

Schools

168

Church in Wales schools

2,978

teachers and other staff

2,086

**governors supporting
Church in Wales schools**

21,261

**children and young people in
our schools**

The Church has always been committed to education and life long learning. We work with local authorities and the Welsh Assembly Government to provide schools across Wales.

Our schools don't serve churches; they serve communities, reflecting and including every religious and cultural flavour in inner cities, outer estates and the rural countryside. Their vision and commitment is to be truly comprehensive in their intake and outlook. Local churches develop close pastoral links with these schools, supported by a network of church education staff across Wales.

Our schools are committed to helping all children to reach their full potential and to do so in an atmosphere of acceptance and reflection that gives direction and purpose to their lives. In today's world, attitudes and spirituality, values and aspirations will be as important as technical competencies.



St Joseph's High School,
Wrexham – a joint Roman
Catholic/Church in Wales
secondary school.

Care for the environment

10

principles for sustainability have been developed to guide our approach to the environment

Fair Trade

we encourage ethical purchasing at every level

Guide

we have produced a Parish Green Guide to help take forward our policies and procedures

Awards

we give an award each year for green projects in each diocese that pursue these issues

We believe the Earth and its resources are God's precious creation.

We run national conferences often dealing with controversial issues such as sustainable populations (organised with the Open University) and nuclear energy, as well as multi agency events on the implications of climate change (with the Institute of Welsh Affairs and the Institute of Directors).

Our group 'Church Action on Sustaining the Environment' (CHASE) has representatives on a variety of national and international environment bodies and seeks to guide church policy on this vital topic. We have aligned our approach with the Welsh Assembly Government's sustainable development policy.

Local churches throughout Wales are active in different campaigns, and worship and church life include a focus on environmental concerns and action.



St Joseph's Church,
Cwmaman – Solar panels
on this church which also
provides space for
community activity.

Rural life

6

Rural Life Advisers – one in each Diocese

80%

of our parishes are in or close to a rural area

Farming

remains a key industry for Wales (although it accounts for less than 2% of GDP)

Identity

rural self-image is widely felt in Wales e.g 280,000 visitors to the Royal Welsh Show each year

We have always been an integral part of rural Wales and we care deeply about its future. Rural parishes play a key role in the life of the community with all its social and economic challenges.

Through our Rural Life Advisers and their networks in each of the six dioceses, we work with other agencies such as the Welsh Assembly Government, Farming Unions, Farm Crisis Network, and the Institute of Rural Health as well as markets, food co-ops, tourism bodies and third sector organisations.

We administered the Addington welfare fund during the Foot and Mouth Disease outbreaks and offer support to local farmers' families and communities.

We contribute to the Rural Development Plan (2013) and Farming Food and Countryside 2020 and support the vision of a secure future for agriculture in Wales.



Rural life adviser – the Revd Eileen Davies talking to a local farmer in Newcastle Emllyn.

Churchyards

1,217

churchyards across Wales

8,100

funerals in 2007

125,000

hours of volunteer time in every year
maintaining our churchyards

£16 million

of repair works required to our
churchyards

Churchyards tell the story of the Welsh nation and record the lives of the people of Wales. They are vital signposts to the past; the land around the church indicates the area known in Welsh as the 'llan'. They are places that offer comfort and solace.

Churchyards are important habitats for wildlife as well as settings for listed church buildings. Churchyards are often vital green spaces in built-up areas.

Our churchyards are essential community assets providing local burial space for communities. Most of our churchyards are maintained by each local Parochial Church Council (even after there is no further space for burials) without any formal state aid. We estimate that in 10 years, two-thirds of our churchyards will have no space for further burials.

Community Councils and Local Authorities do offer grant assistance in some places but more help is needed if our churchyards are to continue to serve Welsh communities.



St Bridget's Church, St Bride's Major – school children investigating local history in the churchyard.

Chaplaincy

20

chaplains in Further and Higher Education serving 340,000 students, and 29,000 staff

27

chaplains in 4 prisons, with 1,517 staff, and 2,807 inmates

61

chaplains in 117 hospitals with 88,000 staff and 13,354 beds

Armed Services

ministering to personnel at home and overseas

We have an active presence within the life and structures of many different organisations working with their staff and those they serve. Chaplains are appointed to the police, prisons, hospitals, the deaf, armed services, seafarers, businesses, educational establishments and fire brigades.

Chaplains serve on committees and project groups, which make decisions affecting the whole life of the organisation, as well as providing a range of services to particular individuals and groups. The role of the chaplain is valued as a model and catalyst for spirituality, care, social action and personal transformation.

Chaplains are seen as key colleagues in the various institutions. Different faiths and value systems are increasingly recognised and valued as part of the ethos, health and wellbeing of these institutions.



Ysbyty Gwynedd, Bangor –
Revd Wynne Roberts,
hospital chaplain, talking
with catering staff.

Working with...

Government

from the European Union to local authorities

Public sector

including NHS Wales and the four Police Forces

Private sector

business organisations and local companies

Third sector

Welsh Council for Voluntary Action and local groups

Just as God cares about all aspects of life, so does the Church. That is why we get involved where decisions are made which affect the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of us all.

We work in partnership with others, both locally and strategically, because the challenges of Wales are greater than any one organisation or sector can address on its own.

We are involved in a broad range of issues, including rural affairs, deprivation, poverty, the environment and energy, binge-drinking, offending, anti social behaviour, international affairs and relationships with other faiths.

Our aspiration is to help make a real difference to the communities of Wales. We believe this is a spiritual agenda.



The National Assembly for Wales – one of the partners we are working with to promote a fair and just society for all.

And by the way...

Quietness

places of peace and tranquillity

Meditation

a chance to think and to pray

Music

inspiring and uplifting

Learning and sharing

to explore wisdom and ideas together

On weekdays, as well as Sundays, you can share your concerns with God and with others and give thanks for all that is good. The Church supports you at significant moments in your life, whether of celebration or difficulty, as you join in the pattern of shared worship throughout the year.

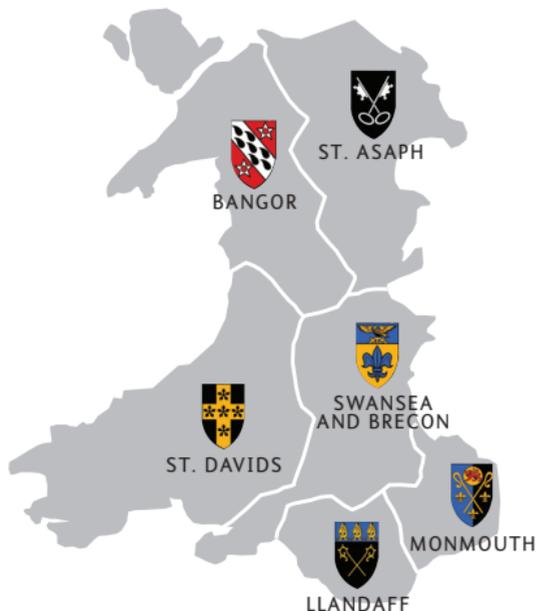
We believe spirituality is central to every part of life whether at work or at home and we offer help, counsel and advice on all matters which concern you. The Church brings the rich traditions of the past to the questions and challenges of the 21st Century.

All are welcome – at the very heart of worship is the love of God for each person. As we respond to this love in new and different ways, we contribute to the transformation of organisations and communities across Wales and discover more of what the Bible calls 'life in all its fullness'.



St Brynach's Church, Nevern
– the Nevern cross reminds
us of the timelessness of
spirituality and the Christian
faith.

If you want to know more...



Telephone Numbers:

Provincial Office: 029 2034 8200

Diocesan Offices:

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Bangor 01248 354999

St Davids 01267 236145

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Monmouth 01633 267490

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