

ST NICHOLAS BRADFIELD

PARISH PROFILE

2024



THE DIOCESE OF
SHEFFIELD

HI THERE!

Welcome to our profile! We are thrilled to share the vibrant life and mission of Bradfield Parish with you. Our church, with its rich history dating back to 1109, stands as a beacon of faith, community, and spiritual growth. As we embark on a new season of church revitalisation, praying and believing for revival and renewal, we are looking for a vicar who is passionate about pioneering innovative and rural ministry. At Bradfield we are learning how to infuse charismatic spirituality with traditional worship styles. Here, you'll find a supportive community, dynamic worship, and numerous opportunities for mission, discipleship, and every member ministry.

We invite you to prayerfully consider joining us in our journey of faith, in to this next season.

TABLE OF **CONTENTS**

- Introduction
- Our Bishops
- Our Aim
- Our Mission
- Our New Priest
- The Rectory
- Our Parish
- Our Church and Our People
- The Church and the Community
- The Church Building



INTRODUCTION

We believe God wants to bring revival to Bradfield and the surrounding area. We are excited for the next season as we engage our missional imaginations with the Lord to pioneer a new model for rural ministry in Bradfield and we are looking for a leader to join us in this and take this forward who can bring Word and Spirit ministry to a liturgical context.

We are working closely with our neighbouring parish, Wadsley church and are seeking a leader that will bring a team of people of all ages from Wadsley over to Bradfield to start a revitalisation project. This project is externally funded by the Church Commissioners, through SDF, and includes two extra part-time posts, a youth or children's worker and an administrator.

Bradfield Church has stood on this site since 1109 and God has been worshipped here for even longer. This church is a place of deep spiritual roots which stretch back nearly a millennium, it has a commanding view over the village and the near city of Sheffield. We believe this church is called to be a place of deep spiritual wells, encounter with God and intercession for the surrounding area.

Website: <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/17491>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/stnicholas.bradfield>



OUR BISHOPS

There is no denying it: these are challenging times in the Diocese of Sheffield. But by the same token, these are exciting times for us. No-one has any doubt that in 2029 the Church of England in South Yorkshire and the East Riding will look very different from the way it is now — but equally no-one is yet very clear about the shape it will take. Our plan is an ambitious one and we are hungry for change. We are asking tough questions. Will the whole people of God be mobilised for the whole mission of God? What will morale be like, among key lay and ordained leaders? Will attendance figures be in decline or growing? Will there be more stipendiary incumbents or fewer? Will there be more congregations or fewer? Will we raise up a dynamic community of 'Lights for Christ'? Will we grow a praying community of 2025 by 2025?

In this context, the appointment of a new Associate Church Planter with responsibility for the parish of Bradfield in the H5 Mission Area in the deanery of Hallam is therefore even more important. The church in Bradfield is excited about this wonderful opportunity to see the church revitalised through the right minister and the graft team from Wadsley. They long to see the life of Christ expressed through ancient rhythms of worship allied with a spirit infused spirituality. We share their longing to see the church of Christ flourish here — with every person who is baptized confident to shine as a light for Christ in the world to the glory of God the Father.

In this Gospel adventure for the sake of the coming kingdom of God, the leadership of this Church family is going to be vital. It will require someone who is able to exercise an enabling oversight, with a passion for teamwork, for developing leaders and for empowering the whole people of God for the whole mission of God. It will require someone able to raise up leaders to take on responsibilities as 'focal leaders' in every congregation and someone who understands that overseeing the ministry of the body of Christ does not mean doing everything personally, but releasing the gifts and ministries of others.

We are praying that the Lord will bring to us a person with a strong sense of vocation to this task at this time; a person of faith and hope and love in God; a person who laughs easily and has a zest for life in Christ; a person with a sense of adventure, unafraid of failure and reliant on the grace of the Holy Spirit. If that might be you, we would love to explore with you the possibility that the Lord is calling you to this role.

With every blessing

The Rt Revd Dr Pete Wilcox
Bishop of Sheffield

The Rt Revd Sophie Jelley
Bishop of Doncaster

OUR AIM

**'IN SHORT, THE
RENEWAL OF THE
CHURCH AND
REVIVAL OF THE
PARISH LED BY THE
HOLY SPIRIT.'**

Our aim is to see revival in Bradfield and beyond, to be a place of encounters with God mission and to reimagine what rural mission and ministry can look like. We want to see the Renewal and Rejuvenation of the existing traditional model of church and to empower lay leaders to be Released into pioneering new congregations, modes of church and mission. In short, the renewal of the church and revival of the parish led by the Holy Spirit.

There is a small rural population in the actual parish of Bradfield but there are approximately 20,000 people within ten minutes' drive. We are beginning to work closely in mission partnership with our neighbouring churches Wadsley and St Polycarp's Malin Bridge. We all offer different styles of worship but share a passion for ministry that prioritises the word of God and the presence of the Holy Spirit.



OUR MISSION



We believe that Bradfield is called to be a place of prayer and worship, of spiritual refreshment and healing, and of powerful encounter with the living God. St. Nicholas is a beautiful, ancient church in the village of High Bradfield, with a rich tradition of liturgical worship and community involvement. It has an ancient history of Christian spirituality and mission, and we are looking for someone who will lead our congregation into a new era.

Bradfield has been selected as one of 5 Churches in Sheffield Diocese to receive funding from the central Church of England for a full-time stipendiary priest until June 2030. This funding will enable us to appoint our own Stipendiary Minister, an Admin Officer and Children's Worker. This is a wonderful opportunity for Bradfield Church to reimagine ministry in our context and spread the word and teachings of Christ.

We will work under the oversight of Reverend Dan Brown of Wadsley church and our minister will have specific responsibility for St Nicholas Bradfield. In 2022 Wadsley Church sent a graft of their congregation to St. Polycarp's, Malin Bridge with the aim of revitalising a local Church. The church there is now growing and thriving. We are aiming to follow this model and are excited about the future possibilities

The model we wish to adopt is one of a gathered and dispersed mission. The parish church will be the focus of our gathered mission while we hope to also make new disciples with New Congregations in other locations.

Bradfield is a church with a rich heritage in the liturgical, choral tradition and we are looking to bring a life-giving spirituality to this as we seek to be a Bible based, Jesus centred group of disciples. We desire to broaden the age profile of the Church, and encourage children, families, and young adults to join in the adventure we have with the Lord. We are looking forward to building on the good foundations that we have, whilst developing a Church which better serves the needs of the community and broadens its missional focus.

There is potential in the village halls and the primary school for more informal congregations and possibly some missional communities. This would be in line with the Diocesan Strategy of Mission Areas developing New Congregations.



OUR NEW PRIEST

We are looking for an enthusiastic Minister to lead St Nicholas', who loves Jesus and his presence and has a visionary and strategic gifting to reimagine ministry in a rural context. Our new priest will be a team player and team leader, heading up a leadership team which currently includes our non-stipendiary Associate Minister, Sara Goodman and our focal ministers. They will also gather and lead the graft from Wadsley. They will need to be able to champion discipleship to lead every member of the Church in Mission and Ministry Leadership. We trust our new priest will build the worship and community of the church, engaging the wider community and creating a Spirit-filled atmosphere and culture. They will cherish the liturgical and traditional worship whilst infusing it with a dynamic charismatic spirituality. They will be looking to create new worship and discipleship patterns.

It is important to us that the new priest will be able to work with all age groups and backgrounds and create a welcoming space for people that are new to church. We are particularly looking for someone who can connect with young people and young families.

They will be part of a Mission area with Wadsley Church and St Polycarp's Malin Bridge with the oversight of Reverend Dan Brown and so it is important that they are comfortable working within the structure and theology of the mission area.

They will delight in the pastoral opportunities of a tight knit agricultural and rural community as well as the missional possibilities presented by Bradfield's proximity to Sheffield.

It will be a full time, fully funded stipendiary post until June 2030

THE RECTORY

The five-bedroom spacious Victorian rectory at High Bradfield offers a blend of historic charm and modern comfort. Each window in this elegant home is double glazed, ensuring enhanced energy efficiency and noise reduction. In 2024, significant upgrades were made, including roof insulation and a heating system upgrade, further enhancing its comfort and sustainability. The rectory boasts ample living space, characterized by period features and high ceilings, providing a warm and inviting atmosphere. Nestled in the picturesque setting of High Bradfield, just a two-minute walk from the church, it offers the perfect combination of classic Victorian architecture and contemporary amenities, making it an ideal home for a family or a priest. With its large gardens, outdoor courtyard, and a large drive accommodating multiple cars, this rectory provides abundant space for children to play and families to host gatherings, fostering a strong sense of community for our priest.



OUR PARISH



The Civil Parish of Bradfield is extensive, the western half is situated in the moorlands of the Peak District, the eastern half is in lower agricultural land and contains the parish's significant habitations, which include the Sheffield suburb of Stannington, as well as Oughtibridge and Worrall, and the villages of High Bradfield and Low Bradfield. is located 8 miles (13 km) from Sheffield City Centre and 14 miles (23 km) from Barnsley.

Bradfield is one of the largest Parishes in England and covers extensive moor and agricultural land around the Damflask reservoir and Dale Dyke reservoir (the source of the Great Sheffield Flood of 1864), Strines and Agden reservoirs, including the Bradfield, Midhope, and Broomhead moors and eastern parts of the Howden moors.

The Civil Parish has a population of around 18,000 and the Ecclesiastical Parish a population of around 1200.

Our members come from all parts of the Civil Parish including Stannington, Worrall, Loxley Oughtibridge, Penistone, Stocksbridge, Wadsley and Malin Bridge.

There are 2 public Houses in Bradfield, a café/Bistro, an ice-cream parlour and a Post Office. The Village Hall is a thriving centre of the Community and is used by the Church to hold our Harvest Ceilidh, Ploughman's Lunches and occasional events when the Church isn't large enough.

Bradfield Village population is quite static and only includes a handful of children. We have a primary school and a secondary school in the parish.

The local playing field in Low Bradfield is very popular, especially in the Summer, and is home to the Bradfield Cricket Club.

OUR CHURCH AND OUR PEOPLE

Our ministry team consists of Focal Ministers, a self-supporting Minister who has recently completed their training at Wadsley Church and a retired Minister. It is a very supportive team. As we have been without a Rector for 2 years, we have a small team of people who organise weddings, baptisms, and funerals very successfully. We have a regular organist, a choir, and a band of 16 bell ringers.

At the moment our Sunday attendance average is 45 worshippers with 30 communicants, with a desire to grow beyond the 100 that we historically had. Though we have an older worship group we are actively trying to appeal to younger people and families in our planning going forward. We usually average 12 to 15 weddings a year, most couples being from outside the Parish and congregation.



We used to have a very active Children's Church, but as the children grew and moved away, we have not been able to replace them. We have a "creche" with toys at the back of Church for small children to play with during the Services, and we are gradually seeing more toddlers on a Sunday morning. The involvement of children and families in our church life and services is something we seek to improve. We want to attract younger worshippers and value and welcome the children that attend now and want them to feel part of our Church Family. The part-funded families and children worker will play an important role in this.



We have a very active Mothers Union who meet monthly on a Thursday as well as assisting with various services, coffee mornings and pastoral care. Hand Bell ringers meet in Church on Wednesday evenings, Tower Bell ringers meet on Friday evenings, and Flower Group meet monthly on a Wednesday.

A fortnightly Prayer Group started recently and is proving to be very popular; we see prayer as key to the life of our church moving forward.

We want to be a dementia friendly church, and as the number of people suffering from dementia is increasing, we are improving the care we provide and support both during and after Church Services even as we look to the church to grow younger.



The Church has an active Social Media presence, especially via Facebook, and this promotes the Services and other events to a very wide audience, not just within the Parish. The 'A Church Near You' website is updated weekly, and there is a Friends of Bradfield Church Facebook page and website to promote more pastoral activities.

Regular fund-raising events are held each year, including coffee mornings, ploughman's lunches, Christmas fayre, harvest ceilidh and sales of homemade craft items.

We currently have a 10.30am Service every Sunday morning. We have recently established a change of Services to make them more appealing to a wider audience. The 1st and 3rd Sundays are Book of Common Prayer communion, the 2nd Sunday is an All-Age Service led by our Focal Ministers, and the 4th Sunday is Common Worship communion. Our interim Minister has recently started morning prayer at 9am Monday to Thursday.

THE CHURCH AND **THE COMMUNITY**



Bradfield Church has always been very important to the local community and is very well supported, even by residents who don't attend Church Services. Whenever we have fundraising events, they are well attended by people from the village and wider area. Our Mission is to move to the next step and encourage many of these people to begin to Worship Jesus Christ at St. Nicholas.

The "Bradfield Feoffees" manage some social housing in High Bradfield, specifically for local people, and/or people who may be in need in some way. As a Church we work closely with the Feoffees to support the residents and many of whom are involved in the daily life Bradfield Church.

Our social activities range from concerts, as we have amazing acoustics, to coffee mornings in support of both Church funds and charities such as MacMillan Cancer Support. These pull a variety of people from the wider community and surrounding areas into the church.

The Church is used for many Community events throughout the year and is the venue for the Bradfield Festival of Music in June each year. We want to expand and build on this base, providing more Missional opportunities as the Church grows, both within our building and around the village. The Bell Ringers recently held an Open Day for Yorkshire Day, and over 100 people came in support and had a try at ringing. We commemorated the 160th Anniversary of the Great Sheffield Flood in 2024 by hosting a photographic exhibition, which was opened with a Memorial Service at the site of the Dam Wall on Dale Dyke. Our local schools supported the event with work that was displayed in Church for 2 months.

We are hoping that once the new kitchen and servery is installed, we will be able to host far more events, and the Church can become a very valuable Community Space.

The Tower Bell Ringers are a very active group and the members come from all areas of the Parish, as well as Bradfield itself. They attract lots of young people, and it is a great opportunity for them to develop a skill, be part of a team and engage in social activities. They take part in ringing competitions, partake in Learning Events and Courses and ring for special events and Life events.

The Hand Bell Ringers meet in Church each week and are also an active group, ringing every Christmas at a special concert.

We are building good relationships with local schools and there is a huge potential for a stronger presence in the Lower Bradfield part of the village. We intend to develop these links missionally to establish the dispersed side of our church family.

THE CHURCH BUILDING

A Church is of course more than it's building, but at St. Nicholas we are extremely privileged to be able to worship Jesus Christ in a building which has stood for more than 900 years and follow in the footsteps of countless disciples who came before us. The current building dates back to the 15th Century and as a Grade 1 listed building has significant historical importance in both Sheffield and the Peak District. The views from the porch are second to none and as Simon Jenkins wrote in England's Thousand Best Churches "the view is glorious, enjoyed by the weather-beaten gargoyles peering from under toppling pinnacles". The Parish of Bradfield is predominantly rural and only has a population of around 1200 residents, but within a 10-minute drive this increases to 20, 000 people and vast majority of our committed and brilliant congregation travel in from outside of the parish, our missional scope is both parish and benefice wide. Historically, the congregation would primarily have been farming families, but in recent times it attracts more people from the local community and suburbs, who appreciate the type of worship St. Nicholas has to offer.

Our Church has a bell tower housing a peal of 8 bells and currently a band of sixteen experienced bell ringers, ranging in age from 13 to 72. The bells with their magnificent sound are rung every Sunday morning, as well as for weddings and funerals.

Set in the beautiful Peak District, Bradfield is a location of choice for tourists, particularly local tourism from Sheffield. The Church is no different and attracts many visitors on a daily basis and is open from 10am to 4pm. The missional opportunities here are great!

Christian worship in the Bradfield area dates from at least the 9th century, as a Saxon cross discovered in 1870 in Low Bradfield was dated by specialists to that time. This Saxon cross still stands against the North wall in the Nave. Local historian John Wilson (1719–83) believed that the original Norman church was founded in 1109 when interpreting hieroglyphics in the church's original east window.

The Normans regarded the area around Bradfield as strategically important, highlighted by the building of the motte and bailey to the Northwest of the Church.

The architectural evidence suggests that the Norman church was an uncomplicated two cell building and was replaced at the beginning of the 14th century when a square bell tower was added. The Tower was largely rebuilt in the Gothic Perpendicular style during the 1480s, using some of the original masonry which consisted of local gritstone.



THE CHURCH BUILDING CONT.

As a Grade 1 listed building we have a duty of care to protect both the fabric of the Church and its amazing history. Our PCC is a strong collaborative team and have worked hard, along with the Churchwardens, to maintain the Church. Like all Grade 1 listed buildings, it is expensive to maintain and renovate, but we have a duty of care to ensure the history of Bradfield Church continues for many years to come.

Recently we have upgraded the boilers to ensure the Church can continue to be warm during the colder months, and 2 of our historic stained-glass windows, Dixon and Bowlby, have been renovated.

We funded these projects by fundraising and grants from various generous organisations. Plans are currently underway for a kitchen and servery to be installed at the back of Church and will include a disabled toilet. Fundraising is well underway to ensure that adequate money is available for when the work commences soon.

The Church has always been a popular place for weddings, mainly due the magnificent setting as well as the beautiful building, and this continues to be a significant boost to Church finances.

The church building is used for services, as a meeting place for church groups and also occasionally as a performance space. It is also used for various fundraising activities. Recently, it was also used by a brass band as a recording space. There is scope to widen its use, and, with the new kitchen, servery and toilets (including disabled toilet and baby changing facilities), we will be able to accommodate a variety of community activities.

We do not have a separate church hall or meeting room. There is, however, a large area at the rear of the church where pews have been cleared and a temporary kitchen and servery are in place. This is well used by church groups and activities. There is also a small room at the base of the tower that was used by Children's Church and currently houses the photocopier and printing facilities. We also own a small barn at the other end of the village which acts as a storage facility for larger items but is unsuitable to use as a meeting space.

The church building is surrounded by a churchyard that remains open for burials or interment of ashes. Until recently it was grazed by sheep, but the area around the church building and the newer sections of the churchyard are now mown instead, which is paid for by the church. There is one smaller, older section that is now left to nature.



