

St John the Baptist, Latton Parish Profile – 2013



Mission Statement

To maintain the church presence in Latton and to provide a focus of active Christian worship in the village

Who we are and what we do

We are a small congregation noted for the open, friendly and welcoming approach to all who attend services at Latton and the whole community; we are informal, happy to try new ideas and always end our worship with coffee and of course chocolate digestive biscuits! The parish has operated for the last 12 months without church wardens and has functioned successfully by sharing responsibilities between the enthusiastic team made up of the members of the PCC which is virtually the whole congregation.

Discipleship

The Latton Christian Fellowship Group has been in existence for over 25 years; it is non-denominational and brings together people from several churches, some from the Upper Thames group and others from further afield. The friendly, sociable group meets weekly to study the bible, exchange Christian experiences and explore faith issues.

Community Links

There are close links with the Latton Parish Council and there are some shared activities.

Popular events which take place in the parish and are well attended by a good cross-section of the village community include:

1. Harvest Festival and Harvest lunch – the bring and share lunch is a popular social occasion
2. Parish barbeque – an annual event for the last 26 years is an opportunity to meet with friends and neighbours
3. Quiz night – great fun and a good fundraiser, the 'Men's Pudding Competition' is not to be missed
4. Christmas Tree lighting and Christmas Fair – a relatively new but very popular event with good attendance; a good fundraiser for the village (1-3 are organised and run by members of St. John's)

A parish mother and toddler group has been held weekly in the village hall; although this is currently not operating we are assessing the need to it to start up again.

Style of Worship

The style of worship follows a similar pattern to the other churches in the Upper Thames Group with Holy Communion, Morning Prayer and informal 'lay-led' Family Worship.

Services

The services in a normal month are:

- Holy Communion
- A joint Group service at St Sampson
- Morning Prayer
- Family Worship

In a month with a 5th Sunday the extra service is Holy Communion located by rotation at one of the Group churches

All major festivals and Mothering Sunday are celebrated with Holy Communion. These services are attended by an additional non-regular congregation. Harvest Festival is usually combined with a lunch in the village hall. The parish also holds a Crib service and a Carol service at Christmas.

The challenge is to re-invigorate the parish and church participation by showing the relevance of Christ's message to the lives of all residents.



Map of Area

Location and Recent History

Civil Parish

The village of Latton is in the north of Wiltshire near to the boundary with Gloucestershire. It is approximately two miles north of Cricklade, nine miles north of Swindon and around six miles south east of Cirencester. The civil parish is about 730 hectares in area and comprises the village of Latton and the small hamlet of Eysey (also known as Eisey) and the area of land known as Water Eaton. The dual carriage way the A419, which connects Cirencester and Swindon, cuts through the parish area, as does the Roman road known as Ermin Street which also crosses the parish.

In the early 20th century many houses were demolished and rebuilt. In 1947 there were nine council houses built on Limes Place and in the second half of the century around 20 private houses were built near and on Croft Lane, Upcott and Gosditch. At the start of the 21st century several new houses were built in the south of the village. More recently 14 houses were built at Collett Place and 31 in Croft Close. This led to the arrival of new people into the village many with children.

One feature of the Latton area has been gravel extraction which began on a large scale in the 1990s and by the start of the 21st century three especially large pits had been mined. One, to the north-west of the parish, was turned into a lake and is now a feature of the Cotswold Water Park, a scheme which turned

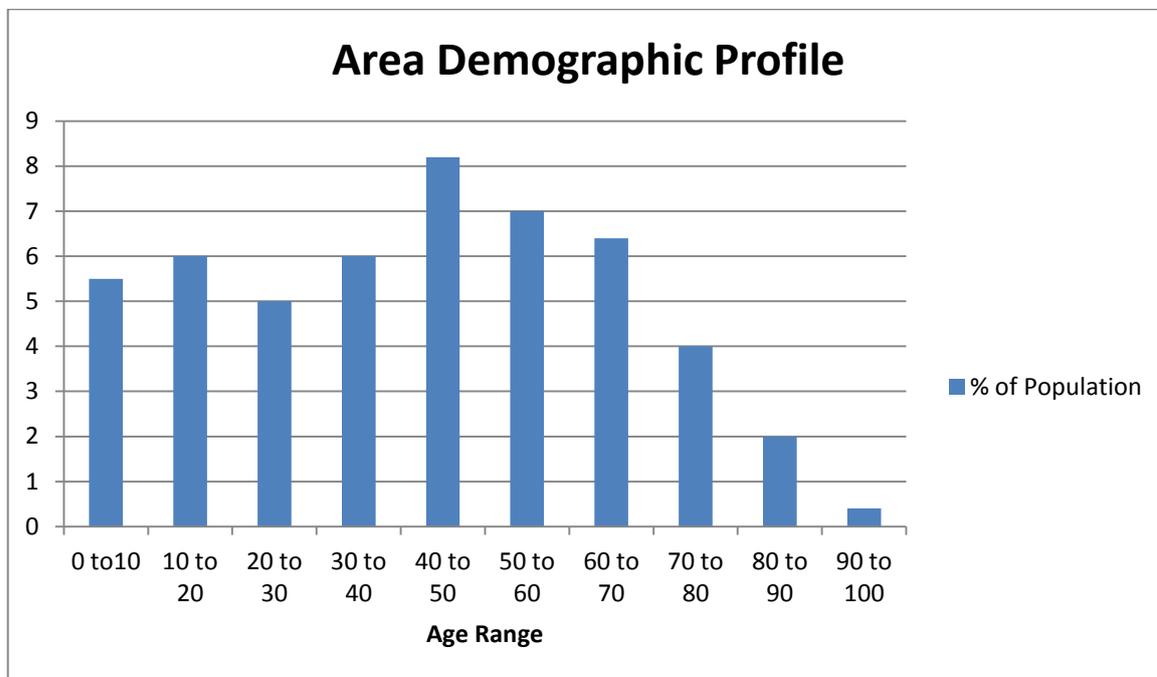
[Upper Thames Group of Parishes](#) "creating opportunities for everyone to experience God's love"

exhausted gravel pits into lakes, attracting wildlife and tourists.

Demography

There were 430 people living in Latton as recorded in the 2001 census this had increased to a projected 550 in 2011. However the population in the core of the village around the church is probably around 300 to 350.

The demography of the community area at the 2011 census is shown below:

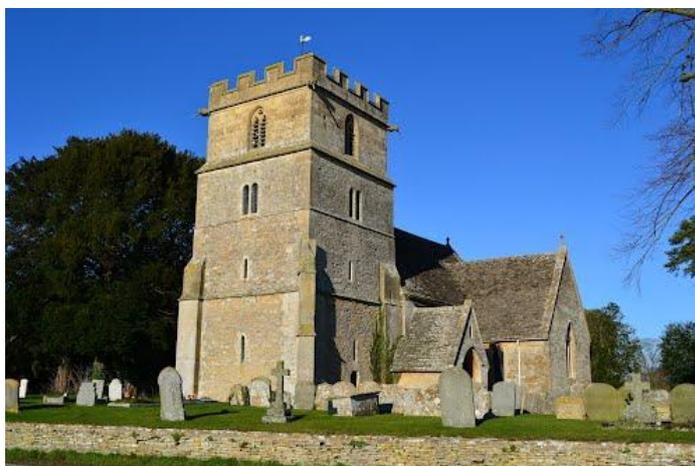


The demographic profile of the Latton village population will be similar though possibly skewed towards the higher age range.

The demographic profile of the congregation of St John’s is however very different with a distinct skew to the higher age band

Church Buildings

Church



The church at Latton is dedicated to St. John the Baptist and is a Grade I listed building. It is thought that the church was built by Cirencester Abbey in the

middle of the 12th century however there was probably a chapel on the site before the church was built.

The church is constructed out of local limestone with the roof of Cotswold stone tiles. The internal walls are fairly plain and there are only a few memorials. One is in the tower in memory of members of the Ware family who died at the start of the 19th century. The tower contains a belfry of five bells which are rung occasionally by the bell ringers from St Sampsons.

Village Hall



The former village school building located adjacent to the church serves as the village hall. It is a Grade II listed building and is used for both parish and village activities. The school building is owned by the Bristol Diocese and it is proposed to offer the Parish Council an Albemarle Lease.

This has followed protracted discussions between the Latton PCC, the Diocese and the Parish Council over complicated issues relating to ownership of the school. Action has been taken by the Diocesan solicitors to establish ownership and to agree with the Charity Commission the establishment of the lease. The action has been with the Parish Council for some time to meet the Charity Commission's conditions.