# ST LAURENCE, LURGASHALL, WEST SUSSEX

## PROFILE OF THE PARISH



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**The Area**

Lurgashall is a traditional English village, probably of Saxon origin, situated in North West Sussex in the South Downs National Park, close to the Surrey/Sussex boundary, between Haslemere, Midhurst and Petworth. It comprises some 4,770 acres of gently undulating agricultural land and broadleaf woodlands. Much of the National Trust's Black Down forms part of the area.



***An aerial view of the main part of the village looking north east. St. Laurence's Church at the centre.***

The focal point is the triangular village green, which is surrounded by delightful old cottages, the Parish Church of St Laurence, the Noah's Ark pub and the Village Shop. The Village Hall and Greengates estate lie to the south of the green.




***Looking across the Green towards the Churchyard and the Noah's Ark***

There are several satellite settlements; the hamlet of Hillgrove lies to the northeast, and that of Roundhurst sits on the lower slopes on the eastern end of Black Down. Other small groups of houses are to be found at Dial and White's Greens.

**Population and Activities**

The population of some 600 residents comes from all walks of life and, with the decline in employment in rural occupations, most are 'in comers'. Older people, who have chosen the area for their retirement for its tranquil and rural setting, form a high percentage of residents, although a number of young families have moved into the parish in the last few years. There are also several small businesses, some situated in a small light industrial area, Court's Yard, but many people are forced to commute elsewhere. The Village School closed in the early 1950s and children have to travel to schools in other towns and villages.

There are active village cricket and horticultural clubs as well as a monthly lunch club and book club. Cricket matches attract numbers of spectators who like to watch the game being played in a traditional setting. The annual village fete, in which the Church takes an active part, attracts many from outside the parish and raises much-needed funds for the village clubs and organisations.

**Local Amenities**

***Accommodation:***

There is a 1980's four-bedroom Rectory in Northchapel, situated adjacent to St Michael's Church, and in a quiet location in the centre of the village.

***Transport:***

There is a very limited bus service to and from surrounding towns.

There is a mainline station in Haslemere with fast trains to both London (Waterloo – 50 minutes) and Portsmouth.

The airports of Heathrow and Gatwick are both within easy access.

The South Coast is about 50 minutes' drive.

***Schools:***

There is a thriving local Community Primary School and Little Oaks Pre-School in the adjacent village of Northchapel.

Midhurst Rother College in Midhurst, The Weald in Billingshurst and Bohunt School in Liphook provide secondary education.

There are also a number of good independent schools in the area.

***Shopping:***

There are good supermarkets in Haslemere. Guildford and Chichester offer wide scope

**The Church**



The Church of St Laurence is situated to the east of the Green. The Church today still shows signs of Saxon and Norman architecture, as well as later additions of the 16th, 17th and 19th Centuries. The 16th Century "Pilgrims' cloister" along its southern side with its Horsham stone roof, was said by E V Lucas in his 1904 book *Highways and Byways in Sussex,* to have been built "for the accommodation of remote parishioners who therein ate their dinner between morning and evening service". It is now used as a vestry and porch.

The Church serves the rural community with traditional weekly services of Sung Eucharist and with monthly services of Holy Communion and Matins. There are 112 electors currently on the Electoral Roll. At Christian festivals, we average an attendance of about one hundred from families, who are not regular worshippers, and normal Sunday congregations are usually around twenty.



***The 'Pilgrims' Cloister' at the south of the Church***

**Our Requirements**

The priest should be energetic enough to deal with three small rural parishes. Ideally, he/she should be a family person and a supportive spouse would be a bonus.

The applicant should have an enthusiastic, outgoing personality, be a good communicator, be interested in people and be accessible to all, whether or not they are regular worshippers. He or she should be sympathetic to rural issues, preaching and living according to the Gospel, and should actively engage in the life of the three villages. It is, therefore, essential that he/she lives in The Rectory on a full-time basis.

He/she should be keen to work sensitively with and foster the gifts and talents of all, young and old, be adaptable and tolerant of the different traditions and expectations of the three parishes and people and preach the Gospel positively and concisely. Someone with a mature spirituality, coupled with a warm and generous sense of humour, and able to encourage families and young people to come to Church and be involved in the life of the Church would be particularly welcome.

We hope that a weekly service can be held in Lurgashall at the same time each Sunday, in so far as this can fit in with comparable requests in Northchapel and Ebernoe.

If a full-time priest is not forthcoming, it will be necessary for any part-time person appointed to ensure that he/she is available when needed and is prepared to be flexible in which days and hours are worked.



***The Chancel and Choir***