

# The Leigh Parish Profile

## July 2012

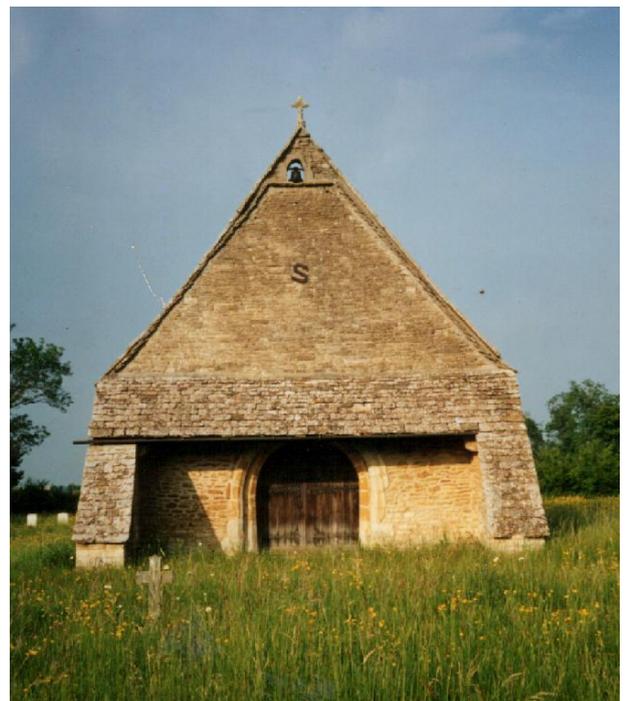
### The Parish

The Leigh is a village with a population of about 300 people. It is situated between Cirencester, 7 miles to the north, and Cricklade, on its eastern boundary. The B4040 passes through it, along which a mixture of period and modern houses has been built. Some of the first dwellings were known as Sundowner's cottages (a cottage started at sunrise and having smoke coming from the chimney by sun down), which now exist as parts of extended properties. There are also farms, many of which are now run as livery yards, and a small housing estate. Within this mix of properties there is a public house/restaurant that has a boules pitch. The children travel by bus to Ashton Keynes School, where the "Ministry", who visit the school regularly, encourage local children to participate in the services at the Church to maintain contact.

### The life of Leigh All Saints church

The electoral roll numbers 11, there are two churchwardens and a LLM who live in Leigh, and the priority is that the church remains central to the community. The focus now is on "big services" which are well attended and the events that surround them. For 2 years now, in June, we have held services to commemorate the Queen's Jubilee & the Coronation followed by a BBQ in the church surroundings. Both were very well attended, enjoyable highlights in village life and have enabled the church to stay central to the community. It is our intention to continue with a similar service and village celebration annually. Baptisms, weddings and funerals remain part of village life.

We hold services at the Old Chancel on the last Sunday of July, weather permitting. The morning service there is a communion with an Ecumenical evening service. These are quite magical services in the picturesque graveyard setting, surrounded by meadows full of wild flowers, in an area of outstanding natural beauty. The services are well attended with many of the congregation travelling from other parishes.



*The Old Chancel at Waterhay*

## Leigh as part of Upper Thames

A recent innovation of Upper Thames Group services is the resumption of the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday service rotating around the four Churches. This provides a wonderful opportunity for the various parishioners to meet and converse on a variety of matters.

The formation of the Upper Thames Group Council is proving an exciting venture, which Leigh has welcomed and it will provide an interesting way forward.

## Leigh church building

The church is unusual in that it was relocated from Waterhay to its current location in Swan Lane, in the centre of the village, in 1898. An account in a newspaper of January 1898 recorded the Bishop of Bristol's consecration of All Saints Church in its then new location, in which he commented that it had stood for many centuries at Waterhay and now "*the old but new Church might be renewed*".



The original church at Waterhay dated from 1250 and a bell tower was added around 1430. This older location is much closer to the river Thames and because of flooding and mud it was often inaccessible.

The nave was dismantled stone by stone in 1896/97 and transported by horse and cart to its present site. It was reconstructed with the porch built on the north side due to the proximity of the road. A new chancel was added to this as the old chancel remained at Waterhay. The Churches Conservation Trust now administers this.

All Saints church is in fairly good repair; the last Quinquennial inspection recommending only small repairs. Time controlled electric heaters provide minimal heat in the church and there is disabled access and seating.

The notice board at the church was donated when the primary school closed. An extension to the churchyard was consecrated in 2004. The village war memorial is contained within the churchyard and is the focus for the annual Remembrance Day service.

The Church is a venue for approved functions, the Parish Council holding its bi-monthly meetings there.