

The Benefices of Wissey Valley and Grimshoe



St. George's, Methwold



St. Mary's, Beachamwell



St. Andrew's, Barton Bendish



All Saints, Boughton



Christ-Church, Whittington



St. Mary's, Feltwell

PROFILE FOR OUR NEW RECTOR



The Church of England
Diocese of Ely



St. Andrew's, Northwold



St. James', Hockwold



St. Margaret's, Wereham



All Saints' Wretton with Stoke Ferry



St. Andrew's, West Dereham



Weeting St. Mary

CONTENTS

- ❖ Foreword from the Bishop of Ely
- ❖ Benefice Overview
- ❖ The Twelve Parishes
- ❖ Parish Profiles
- ❖ Ministry Team
- ❖ The Rectory
- ❖ Our Next Rector
- ❖ Our Vision and Hopes



FOREWORD
RT REV DAGMAR WINTER
ACTING BISHOP OF ELY

In Ely Diocese we aspire to support our parochial clergy with great central support, excellent housing, and clear-sighted episcopal leadership. Our diocese is a warm place for women and men, catholic and evangelical, younger and older to serve.

COME AND JOIN US IN THIS BEAUTIFUL PART OF NORFOLK.

This post is one of several new incumbencies serving larger groups of parishes. We will be supporting whoever is appointed with resources, mentoring and learning opportunities, so that you can thrive and grow these churches into all that God wants them to become. If you want to discuss the post, please contact:

Ven Richard Harlow, Archdeacon, on 07415 757527.



BENEFICE OVERVIEW

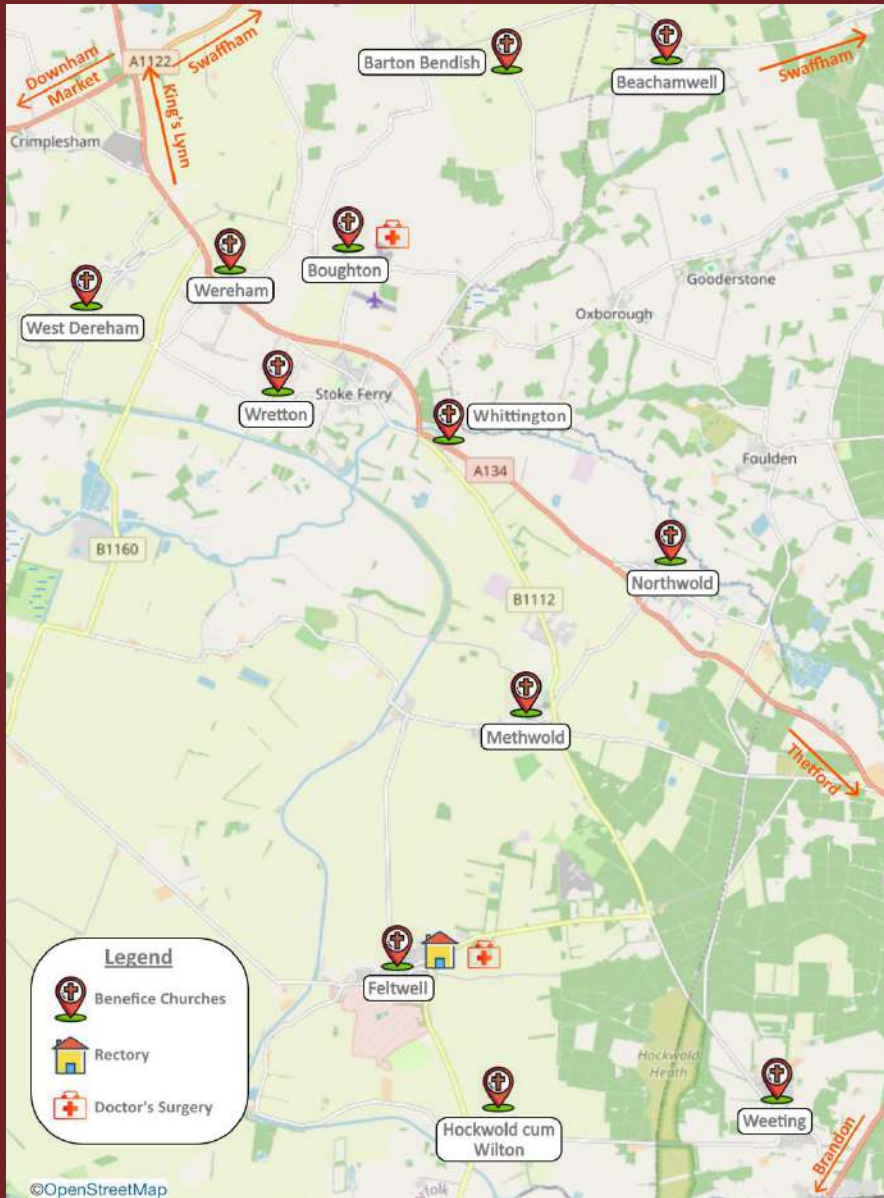
Our Benefices in Plurality include twelve parishes in the Deanery of Fincham and Feltwell, covering an area approx. 10 miles by 15 miles. Whilst this may seem like a large geographical area, these are small villages with big plans! There are areas of new development in several of the villages, a real opportunity for outreach and growth of the worshiping communities to offer a new incumbent. We are a diverse group of parishes and are therefore able to offer a broad band of churchmanship, something to suit all. The twelve offer a rich tapestry of opportunities to engage with their communities.

A variety of means is used to reach out to our communities, from social media to print as well as face to face interactions. Links to our websites

[Wissey Valley Benefice](#) and [Grimshoe Benefice - A Church Near You](#)



There is potential and willingness to support each other across the Benefices, to create a cohesive partnership. As we build momentum, this is an exciting time for any new incumbent to join us.



Our twelve parishes lie in SW Norfolk, a largely rural area with a landscape of wide-open spaces and huge skies punctuated with areas of forest. The villages have a strong sense of community and neighbourliness. Some villages are served by local shops and the whole area by surrounding market towns.



There are many outdoor activities available including cycling, watersports, walking, bird watching and the coast is only an hour away. The local towns all have leisure centres and the High Lodge (Go Ape) Forestry Centre lies just outside Brandon.



Public transport is available, although limited. The major cities of Norwich and Cambridge are both 40 miles away and London roughly 100 miles away, but all are accessible by train from Downham Market and Brandon.



Local hospitals are in King's Lynn and Bury St. Edmunds and each Benefice is served by its own doctor's surgery as well as surgeries in Downham Market.



There are seven village primary schools in the joint benefices four of which are C of E schools. The schools feed into the three high schools in our area - Icen Academy, Methwold; Downham Market High School and 6th Form Centre and Breckland School. Brandon.



Although the rural nature and beauty of this corner of Norfolk is evident, scratch below the surface and it does belie some of the problems found here. The latest census data suggests that this is an area of high employment, but wages are relatively low.



Our benefices are making positive strides to help support the level of need we find e.g. food collection points and a food pantry.

However, the demographic does also include a professional and skilled workforce. Within our congregations we find capable and willing lay people able to support the rector, ministry team and the parishes.

The government uses census data to assess deprivation of the population in seven domains. It is in three of these domains that some of our parishes fall within the 20% most relatively deprived areas in England. These are:

The Education, Skills and Training which measures the lack of attainment and skills.

The Barriers to Housing and Services which measures the physical and financial accessibility of housing and local services.

The Living Environment which measures the quality of the local environment.



THE TWELVE



Barton Bendish



Northwold



Methwold



Beachamwell



Hockwold



Boughton

We are vibrant, inclusive churches that are deeply embedded in the life of their communities, with a sustainable future and growing, diverse congregations.

Our churches are a mixture of medieval Grade I and Grade II listed buildings.



Weeting

They all stand as Beacons of Faith in our local communities.



Wretton



Wereham



West Dereham



Whittington



Feltwell

ST ANDREW'S BARTON BENDISH



Barton Bendish is the smallest parish in the Benefice but has a very committed and active community of about 215 mostly retired people. Patterns of "low Church" worship help encourage the community to attend Fresh Expressions, Breakfast Church, Celtic Service alongside Evensong and Holy Communion. Remembrance, Christmas, Heritage and Animal Services are popular. We continue to explore alternative means of worship and are planning a future Agape Service. Open daily, the church houses the community library which encourages non churchgoers to a quiet place for calm reflection.



Regular, well supported fundraising events run by the PCC include Burns Supper, Open Gardens, Art & Craft Exhibition, Wreath Making, Quizzes and Soup Talks.



The PCC also hosts monthly Pop-Up Cafés to continue to grow our Church community, combat rural isolation, encourage community togetherness and allow access to clergy outside the Church setting.

ST. MARY'S BEACHAMWELL



St. Mary's church in Beachamwell is a 1,000-year old, Grade 1 listed, Saxo-Norman round tower church, it's small but very beautiful.

In February 2022 disaster struck when the thatched nave/chancel roof caught fire and burned out the whole interior. Since then, the church has been undergoing a full restoration, but because of its closure the church community has to work creatively with no building in which to worship.



Currently a monthly service, including a Christmas Carol Service, an Easter Communion and Remembrance Sunday, is held on the village green unless inclement weather moves the party into the village hall.



The PCC organise fundraising including an annual Open Gardens, and various other fund-raisers. Before the fire, the congregation was declining, however, since the events of 2022 we have seen an increasing number of worshippers.

ALL SAINTS' BOUGHTON



All Saints' is a friendly, inclusive church, including dogs! We hold regular Holy Communion services and a popular monthly Full English Breakfast Church. We have a flexible community space which can be used for social events and by community groups too. The PCC organises an Annual Open Gardens Event, supported by many villagers, who volunteer time and talents.



Notable annual events are our Easter vigil, Harvest Supper and Christmas Eve Carols on the Green. The Nine Lessons and Carols Service is a long standing and well-loved tradition.



The Assistant Curate works with All Saints Primary, Stoke Ferry. The church organises Coffee Mornings and children's craft and party events as part of our community outreach programme.

ST MARY'S FELTWELL

On first impression our services veer towards the Anglo Catholic tradition and although comfortable with this, we are open minded to other styles of worship. Currently we hold:

- Sunday Eucharist and Wednesday Evening Prayer, twice a month
- fortnightly Zoom Eucharist
- occasional Benediction
- Lent and 'Go Deeper' groups
- Remembrance Sunday Service
- Annual Festival of Light

We have links with the Primary School and a monthly service at the local nursing home.

"To the community the church is more than just going to services. It is a hub of warmth and friendship and support."



We are building relationships by:

- opening a Food Pantry
- refurbishing a cleared North Aisle with toilets, kitchen and new floor, all fully accessible.
- quiz Nights, Musical Events
- weekly coffee mornings with Community Information Point available.



Our true hope is that this work with the wider community will transfer into a greater interest in and involvement with the life of the worshipping community as we gently convey the power of prayer and spirituality as an important part of our lives.



ST. JAMES' HOCKWOLD CUM WILTON



We are a traditional village church who hold fortnightly Eucharist and weekly Tuesday Morning Prayer services. Being a farming community and near two airbases, Harvest and Remembrance Services are well attended. Our village primary school participates in both of these services and we visit the school as part of their curriculum.



We have six working church bells that are rung for regular services and special occasions by our enthusiastic bell ringing team. St James' is open for private prayer during practice night. Our amazing group of flower arrangers see that we always have seasonal fresh flowers on display.



We have a large open churchyard, much valued by the village community. The importance of the church to the village has been evident during fundraising for a replacement tower clock. We are blessed to have our volunteers who help us with the upkeep of St. James'.

ST. GEORGE'S METHWOLD



Weekly highly participative services comprise Holy Communion and Service of the Word, with bells rung beforehand.

There is weekly morning and evening prayer, and an occasional Service lead by a Methodist Minister.

We hold termly services for the local primary school.



Through parish trusts, we support vulnerable people, including the residents in our almshouses, distributing more than £40,000 over the past two years.

We are a collection point for the Trussell Trust Foodbank.

The church is in good repair and there is a strong team of volunteers for cleaning, flower arranging and bell-ringing.



Parishioners run craft sessions at the primary school. Many local children attend the Methwold Youth Centre, a church initiative; we provide financial support as the centre continues to expand.

Our twice monthly community coffee mornings are well attended and supported by volunteers from across the community.

We hold annual rock concerts performed by local bands that are sellout events.

ST. ANDREW'S NORTHWOLD



- At St. Andrew's we hold :
- fortnightly Holy Communion
 - occasional Services of the Word and Evensong
 - weekly prayer meetings



We have strong links to our community with monthly coffee mornings. We have an annual Church Bazaar, organ recitals and flower festivals. Popular services for children and youth include a Toy, Pet, and Posada Service. Village organisations decorate trees at Christmas. Plough Monday is celebrated at the beginning of January. Our church is open daily, to encourage our village and beyond to experience the awe, wonder and beautiful safe space, including the Easter Sepulchre.



Messy church is held throughout the year. We have a church choir, which practises weekly and also sings at benefice services.

We have close connections with Norman Primary with class visits to explore and enjoy the historical environment. The rector is welcomed into school for collective worship and Christian calendar services including Ash Wednesday and Pentecost. Year 6 children from the Trinity Partnership take part in the Walsingham Easter Pilgrimage. A stall is held at Northwold Carnival annually as a fund raiser. We support the Feltwell Food Pantry

WEETING ST. MARY

St. Mary the Virgin holds regular Holy Eucharists and occasional Services of the Word. During Holy Week a Tenebrae service is held. At Christmas, festivals take place. In 2024 it will be a Christmas Tree festival. Informal Eucharists actively involving children at Pentecost and other feasts encourage all age participation.



As part of outreach, the Church “mans” the Community Hub at the annual Weeting Steam Rally. Our Associate Priest visits a local care home once a month and is joined by Weeting volunteers. The Parish has a commissioned Eucharistic Minister giving Home Communion to the housebound. The nave is a flexible space which accommodates differing events.



There are strong links with Weeting Primary School. The ministry team works with pupils in school and school services are held in the church. Year 6 Weeting students, and those of the other two schools in the Trinity partnership, undertake an annual day pilgrimage to Walsingham in the summer term.



ST. MARGARET'S WEREHAM



Our services at St. Margaret's:

- monthly Holy Communion and Evensong
- quarterly All Age Family Service
- additional services throughout the year include Easter, Pentecost, a Pet Friendly Service, Remembrance Service, Carol Service and Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve



Through faith we hold regular events throughout the year to support our community as a whole. Among these are Open Gardens, our Church Festival, the Annual Church Cycle Ride and Advent Windows. Our children's group, the Vine, attracts a good number of children growing in faith and structured activity.



We seek to witness to the Christian faith by being a visible presence through worship and engagement with the community. We aim to continue to engage with children and young families, to nurture the sick and elderly and those who live alone. Our newly established Ash Grave Garden has been created as a sacred space where the ashes of loved ones can be laid to rest.

ST. ANDREW'S WEST DEREHAM



St. Andrew's has a variety of services:

- Holy Communion - Common Worship
- a Celtic Morning - a gentle service seeking wholeness and healing for all, with words inspired by the Celtic saints
- Informal Breakfast Church where we offer craft activities for children
- a weekly online Service of the Word



We endeavour to be present in the community wherever possible, supporting village initiatives. As followers of Christ it is our mission to share the good news of Jesus. Our church is open daily and we encourage the folk in our village to use it as a space for contemplation, experiencing it as a 'thin' place.



Prayer underlies everything we do. We have a weekly online prayer group. In all things whether in worship or practical tasks we are a committed and supportive team.

In recent years a variety of renovations have been carried out, many by church members assisted by local tradesmen.

CHRIST-CHURCH WHITTINGTON

Christ-Church is the parish church of Whittington, a village on the River Wissey, of less than 500 residents. Our Grade II listed building, dedicated to the memory of Reverend Charles Norman, is celebrating its 150th year with fundraising activities to involve the community. The church is open daily and has a kitchen and toilet.



We actively support the local foodbank, toilet twinning and the Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child shoebox appeal. We have a breakfast service every other month which has interested a few curious residents and we are happy to share services within the benefice.



We are the only public building in the village and have a successful, church run, "Tiny Tots" group weekly. The building is used by Northwold and Whittington Parish Council for meetings. We hold an annual "Songs of Praise" service, down by the river, which usually has over 50 people singing God's praise from under a gazebo, more than twice our average congregation.



ALL SAINTS' WRETTON WITH STOKE FERRY

All Saints' Church serves the villages of Wretton and Stoke Ferry and includes All Saints' Academy, a member of DEMAT. We are a welcoming congregation of around 15 - 20 who actively involve the community as often as possible. We believe it's important to be approachable and inviting. We love different and interesting varieties of ministry in an attempt to cast a broad net.



The church building is open every day. We have a traditional organ and a great sound system. We have a toilet and kitchenette and we offer refreshments with fellowship after Sunday services. The monthly coffee mornings are well supported as are annual events such as Afternoon Tea, the Pet service, All Souls and Harvest Festival. We are proud to support our benefice churches and have a warm relationship with all.



MEET THE TEAM... feel free to contact us! ...



Pippa was an LLM for a long time before being ordained. She is an architectural stained glass artist. She advocates for justice and social welfare issues.

Rev'd Pippa Blackall
07899 912020



A former Chief Superintendent, in the police, Ray is an Associate Priest. He is married to Vicky and they have two dogs. He loves gardening and beekeeping.

Rev'd Ray Burman
01842 828891



Juanita felt a call to SSOM after more than 20 years as a primary school teacher. She is passionate to spread the good news of the love of God.

Rev'd Juanita Hawthorne
01366 728545



Diane loves using the energy that God has given her - to teach, to preach and to enjoy an active life.

Diane Mantle LLM



Tony thanks the Lord for his health and well being which he believes is mainly due to his cycling.

Tony Mills LLM
07748 752416



Janet has worked as a teacher and craft potter. She still enjoys creating things and inventing craft projects for children.

Janet Tanton LLM
07719 330762



Moira is a retired maths teacher who enjoys travel. She has transferred from the Diocese of Auckland, NZ

Moira Saunders LLM
07990 111535



Michael is a follower of Jesus. He likes Lindisfarne, Charles Dickens and Bob Dylan.

Michael Poole ALM
Worship Leader 07990 513835



Peter is treasurer of Weeting church. He enjoys walking and playing with his dog Elsa who attends church.

Peter Saward ALM Admin



Susan originates from East Sussex. She has 19 grandchildren! As well as her church commitments she also runs a pottery.

Susan Parker-Smith ALM Baptism,
Children and Families 07849 157080

Julianne is churchwarden in Weeting where she ministers Home Communion. She is interested in the history of the church.



Julianne Young
ALM Music

Tamsin is a teacher and safeguarding lead for her school. She is a baptism coordinator and leads intercessions.

Tamsin Wright ALM Baptism
07717 507665



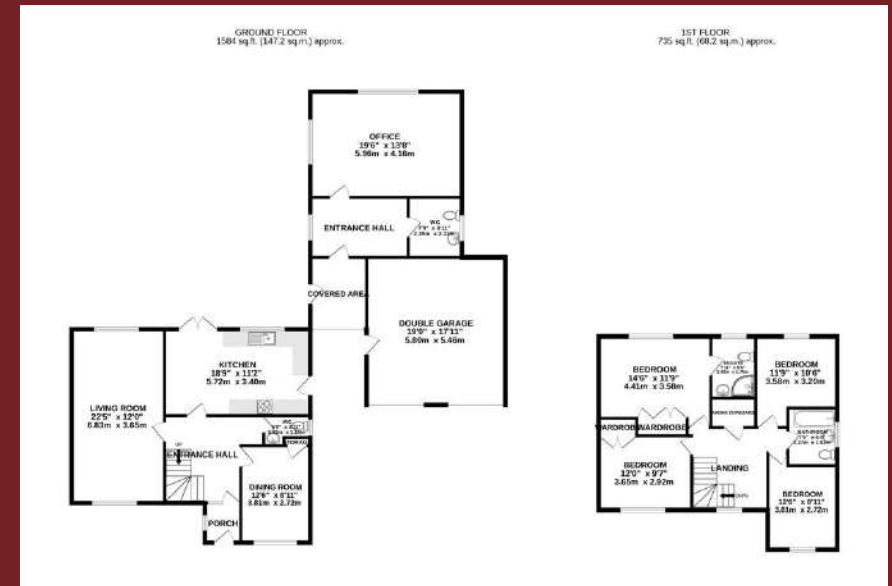
Chris is from north of the border. She has been a church warden, and Administrator for for as long as she can remember!

Chris Parker ALM Benefice
Administrator 01842 827152



Helaine Wyatt
Benefice Administrator

THE RECTORY



The Rectory, Oak Street, Feltwell

We have a comfortable four bedroom rectory ready and waiting for you to move into. The house comes with the added attraction of a detached purpose-built Benefice Office. There is also a double garage, extra parking space for four cars and an easily maintained garden. It is well situated for easy access to local services - Feltwell Surgery, primary school, two well stocked village stores, post office, pub, garage, beauty salon, hairdressers and a card and gift shop. Excellent rail links from Brandon, Downham Market and Ely are within easy reach. All in all, an ideal and practical base for an exciting ministry.



OUR NEXT RECTOR - *could this be you?*

An
Inspiring
Faith

Capable of
leading a
large team,
delegating tasks
and working
collaboratively

Community
orientated,
visible and
approachable

Empathy
and
Compassion

Open
to new ideas,
forward-thinking,
welcoming and
supportive of
different worship
styles and
community
needs

Inclusive
and
Respectful

Humour
and
Positivity

OUR VISION AND HOPES....

Growth and Sustainability

We are intent on growing our congregations and increasing participation in worship and community events

Our churches aim to deepen their connection with local communities, making them a welcome and integral part of village life

Community Engagement

Many churches are focusing on engaging with children, young families and schools

We seek to attract a broader range of people, including those who may not see themselves as "churchy" and younger families



Outreach
and
Support

Collaborative
Ministry

Spiritual
and
Social
Space

We have a strong emphasis on outreach with initiatives like food pantries, community coffee mornings and children's groups aimed at supporting those in need and fostering a sense of community.
We also plan to expand our charitable work and partnerships

As a group of churches we plan to support each other and work collaboratively, sharing resources and ideas to strengthen our collective mission

We aim to be places where people can come not just for worship, but also for social interaction, contemplation and community events.
We are working to make our buildings more versatile and accessible, returning to a more central role in our communities

THANK YOU

