

THE BRETT VALLEY BENEFICE



Bildeston, St Mary Magdalene



Lindsey, St Peter's



Whatfield, St Margaret of Antioch



Semer, All Saints



Nedging, St Mary



Naughton, St Mary

Contents

	Page
The Benefice In Its Setting	3-4
What We Can Offer You	4
What We Are Looking For In Our New Priest	5
Our Strengths and Challenges	5-6
Our Parishes:	
Bildeston with Wattisham	7-8
Lindsey	9
Whatfield	10
Semer	11
Nedging	12
Naughton	13
Benefice Service Pattern	14
Church Electoral Roll Figures	14
Occasional Offices	15
The Parsonage House	16-17
Hadleigh Deanery	18-19
The Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich	19-22

THE BENEFICE IN ITS SETTING

Suffolk is welcoming, family-friendly and one of the country's best-kept secrets!



We are 7 parishes with 6 churches, located in the heart of the South Suffolk countryside to the west of the A12 and to the south of the A14, almost equidistant between Ipswich, Bury St Edmunds and Colchester. London, Cambridge and Norwich are all easily accessible by both road and rail.

The Benefice has around 2,283 parishioners (2021 census) distributed through the villages and associated hamlets. Agriculture, Wattisham Airfield, and a number of manufacturing and service industries provide employment within the Benefice, but residents also commute to Ipswich, Bury St Edmunds, Colchester, Stowmarket, Sudbury and Hadleigh as well as to London and further afield. This is a very desirable area to live, so new houses are being built in the Benefice and Deanery, and more are planned, particularly in Bildeston.

We are part of Hadleigh Deanery (see page 18), and Hadleigh is our nearest market town, with a Co-op, Morrisons, a number of excellent independent retailers, sports facilities, a health centre and pharmacy, several dentists, three primary schools and Hadleigh High School. Our largest village, Bildeston, also has a health centre, shops, a post office, primary school, hotel and restaurant, hairdresser etc., while Semer has a nationally renowned farm shop and Whatfield has a church school.





Our area of South Suffolk is particularly famous for its medieval wool towns such as Lavenham, and for its beautiful villages with half-timbered buildings and striking churches. The Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, only a few miles away from our Benefice, has been immortalised through the paintings of John Constable and Thomas Gainsborough.

The Suffolk Coast is a 50-mile stretch of heritage coastline and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Its attractions range from a major international port and beautiful old sea front at Felixstowe, to opportunities to go to concerts at Snape Maltings, to see the famous archaeological discoveries of Sutton Hoo, to sail at Woodbridge, to visit the nature reserves at Minsmere and along the coast near Orford with its famous castle and sea food, and to take in the beauty of the little coastal town of Southwold; all are less than an hour's drive away. In the centre of the county lies Bury St Edmunds with its beautiful cathedral and old Abbey grounds.

WHAT WE CAN OFFER YOU

- A warm and prayerful welcome!
- A well-appointed house in the Benefice.
- Friendly caring people with a good team spirit and close Benefice identity.
- Two vibrant and successful primary schools within the Benefice (one a church school).
- Supportive PCCs that can deal with the finances and fabric of the churches.
- A Reader to help with taking services, school visits, etc.
- A Benefice Administrator who is also a Reader in Training.
- Active lay people willing to help and share the share the ministry.
- The opportunity to minister in a sought-after rural location close to urban centres with good rail networks.

WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR IN OUR NEW PRIEST

We are very much aware that we have high expectations of our new priest that will need to be managed within the limits of what is currently a part-time post.

Suffolk's county motto is "Guide Our Endeavour" and that is what we are looking for – someone to guide our endeavour! We need someone who understands rural multi-parish ministry, and the opportunities and challenges this involves. Our ideal Parish Priest:

- Will be a leader who will seek God's vision for the church.
- Will try to have a visible presence in our village communities and be the point of contact for pastoral care.
- Will have a good sense of humour, energy and stamina, and be willing to learn.
- Will have creative ideas for reinvigorating church life in a rural benefice and for discovering and developing the gifts and vocations of others, working closely with the ministry team.
- Will have a vibrant, prayerful, living faith that fuels a deep love for the people of the Benefice
- Will be able to manage change with sensitivity and humility.
- Will be enthusiastic about working with our 2 primary schools and about bringing children and families into church activities, while continuing to engage with the existing older congregations.
- Will be at ease with using a wide variety of service styles (including BCP, Common Worship, Messy Church etc.) and able to teach from God's word in an engaging and relevant way.
- Will be willing to support rural services such as Rogation and Harvest, which play an important part in boosting church attendance in the Benefice.
- Will be computer literate with good organisational skills and time management.
- Will have their own transport – the ability to drive is essential.

OUR STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

We hope the following is a realistic assessment of what you would be facing if you came to be our Priest.

Our Strengths

- We have worked well together since the creation of the Benefice in 2002, and the parishes have a real sense of togetherness.
- In each of our villages there are talented people who will help in any way they can to support the church. We would like to expand this group so that younger people are attracted to take over from their elders.
- There are two schools in the Benefice, at Bildeston and Whatfield, both rated 'Good' by OFSTED. The new Rector would be invited to

be a School Governor, and the Reader is currently involved in maintaining relationships between church and school.

- Services are organised on a Benefice basis and Readers/Elders are licenced to the whole Benefice.
- The incumbent meets regularly with the Churchwardens and the lay ministry team to exchange information, plan the future and share ideas. All of the team are willing to help out across the Benefice.
- There is respect for individual parishes' identities and churchmanship but a strong sense of Benefice.
- All PCCs have lay vice-chairmen able and willing to chair meetings. Our new priest would not be expected to attend all PCC meetings (unless they want to!).
- A monthly parish magazine, Roundabout, was distributed to all parishes in our Benefice. The Editor retired after 40 years and the magazine lapsed for 3 months before being revived in a slightly different format. It is now distributed to all houses in the participating parishes. Bildeston and Whatfield have their own magazines.
- The Benefice has traditionally paid its parish share and its clergy expenses in full and on time.
- All of our churches (except Semer) are left open in daytime and this is much appreciated by church visitors and dog-walkers alike. Semer's key is readily available at the local farm shop.
- We have a Benefice Administrator to support the work of the Rector.

Our Challenges

- There will be a need to work creatively with the parishes on the service rota to fit the needs of the parishes but accepting that there are fewer clergy available to take services.
- Encourage people to move around more to other churches in the Benefice.
- Like most churches across the land, we would like to attract more young people and families into church and/or church-related activities.
- We currently have one Reader and a Reader-in-Training and would like to expand the Lay Ministry Team.
- We would like to find ways to enhance and expand the music in our churches as we are now down to one regular organist.
- We need to recruit more people willing to be active Churchwardens and PCC members in some parishes.
- Some of our churches need loos!
- All of us struggle with the increasing demands of the Parish Share.
- Our Reader has been encouraging the promotion of Eco-Church in the benefice but we need to do more.
- After a challenging period Whatfield does not currently have a Churchwarden and a full, functioning PCC needs to be established in the parish.
- We need to engage more fully in the Growing in God initiative.

THE CHURCHES

All of the churches in the Benefice are medieval; all require a lot of maintenance but are much loved. All the churches have open graveyards. The nearest crematorium is in Ipswich.

Bildeston parish is officially Bildeston with Wattisham, but St Nicholas' Wattisham was declared redundant in 1977 when the ecclesiastical parish was united with Bildeston. The South Chapel at Bildeston was then dedicated to St Nicholas and was refurbished with furniture from the closed church. There is a Strict Baptist Chapel in Wattisham.

ST MARY MAGDALENE, BILDESTON



Within this historic village (circa 1200 inhabitants) is St Mary Magdalene, the largest and lead church in the Benefice and the only church with the capacity for large weddings, funerals and concerts. Bildeston is a thriving community of shops, hotel and restaurant, a wine bar, primary school, Health Centre, a sports-field and pavilion, various small and medium sized businesses and a well-used modern village hall with bowling green and children's adventure playground attached. Excellent parish magazines – The Bildeston Bugle and Roundabout serve the whole village.

The magnificent Grade 2 listed, 12th century building now stands in splendid isolation, about 500m from the centre of the village although happily six houses have recently been established adjacent to the church once again. During the 13th century however, the village gradually relocated and grew to be near the site of a market at the crossroads in the valley below.

In 1975 the church lost its tower, which collapsed while maintenance work was being carried out – thankfully the medieval bells had been removed! The replacement tower, paid for by much fund-raising, is topped by a new

timber framed structure with a slender lead-covered spire. Fortunately, testimony to the 15th century stone masons survives in the grand flushwork of the south porch. There is also a glorious window depicting the Annunciation and other scenes, created by the Kempe workshop.

The church can seat up to 300 people, though at present a typical Sunday service attracts only about 15-20. However, in 2023 numbers reached 66 for Easter Sunday, 59 for the Christmas Carol Service, 30 for the Crib Service and 44 for Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve. The school uses the church for its Christingle Service with an attendance of 160. Remembrance Sunday is a joint service with the Baptist Church and held annually in the village square around the war memorial. A popular village event with normally over 200 attendees.

There is an active fund-raising committee which meets on a regular basis and puts on various events throughout the year including a Plant Sale, Quizzes, Concert Evenings, Christmas Fayre and Advent Lunch.

Bildeston is fairly central in worship, using Common Worship for its morning Eucharists, which occurs monthly. Morning Prayer is the other monthly service. A service of Thanksgiving of remembrance and reflection is held around All Souls Day. There are two regular organists who cover Sunday services and the Occasional Offices as needed. There is a ring of six bells and eight or nine ringers meet every week to practice and to ring for services.



ST PETER'S, LINDSEY



St. Peter's is the parish church of the small village of Lindsey which has some 1208 inhabitants of which 36 are under 21 and 46 are over 70 (census 2021).

The church dates from the 13th century. The church tower fell down in 1836 and was replaced by a small weatherboarded bellcote. Nicholas Pevsner considered St. Peter's to be one of the fifty most beautiful parish churches in Suffolk. His reason being that its thirteenth and fourteenth century architecture is unusually light and at the same time the church has a calm and peaceful atmosphere.

St. Peter's is deemed a 'Festival Church' and has between four and six services a year to which a congregation of some 15 to 30 can be attracted. In addition, attracted by the excellent acoustics, the church is used regularly by a local choir for rehearsals and on occasion, concerts. The church can seat upwards of a hundred.

Financially the church gets by. It has a number of regular donors and the choir also makes a quarterly contribution. In addition, the Friends of St. Peter's have made contributions to the cost of major repairs to the church and upgrading of the churchyard. In the last two years they contributed £6,860 towards tree work in the churchyard and major repairs to the fabric in line with work recommended in the last quinquennial report. The Friends are an independent body founded in 2000 to raise funds for the upkeep of the church fabric and grounds and are a vital support to St. Peter's.



ST MARGARET OF ANTIOCH, WHATFIELD

Whatfield is a compact village of about 350 people in a 1600-acre parish, set within rolling countryside. The ancient village has always been dedicated to farming, and retains beautiful cottages, some thatched and restored, and farms, with many 20th and 21st century additions. Many families have deep roots in the village and recently some affordable homes have been built for young people with local connections to stay or return to the village. Most people are content to stay for many years.



St Margaret's has Saxon origins, with many early 14th century additions and a simple, attractive interior. Currently work is in progress to repair the north wall. Services are once a month and taken by a Reader or retired member of the clergy. The churchyard is beautifully maintained by volunteers. Flower arranging and cleaning rotas are fully serviced.

The village school, Whatfield Church of England VC Primary School, is in a Federation with Bildeston Primary School. The Executive Headteacher works across both schools. Whatfield and Bildeston schools have both been awarded Good status by OFSTED. Collective Worship is held weekly in both schools. Whatfield School holds about 4 services a year in the church, and the children have undertaken visits to the church to learn about its role in our community.

Whatfield Village Hall is used by the school daily. The hall is well maintained and is home to Whatfield Carpet Bowls Club. A licenced bar, run by volunteers, is available when hiring the hall, at village events and as a social hub for the village.

The Parish Council is active in providing representation for the village in local affairs. Community Council runs events that are well supported by the village. There are also very productive allotments. The Salvation Army hosts a monthly lunch and a coffee morning in the SA Hall. PCC meetings are held in the SA Hall in the colder months.

ALL SAINTS, SEMER



The village of Semer took its name from the Mere around which the Church, the Old School, Mission Hall and the Manor House were located. As with most Suffolk villages, Semer's income was based on agriculture, and most of the population were involved in farming. The current farming community is thriving, keen on utilising the most up to date farm practices, promoting conservation and diversifying into related activities. The very successful local Farm Shop, Hollow Trees, is nationally renowned and is the village's largest local employer.

The current population of Semer is only 130, most of whom are working professionals or retired couples although there are families living in the village who have been here for over 3 generations.

The dedicated and friendly group of parishioners are actively involved with local community groups sharing help and assistance, in monthly crafty coffee gatherings and fund-raising events throughout the year. The quiz nights, exhibitions of local history and musical recitals have all been well supported. The church meadow running alongside the River Brett has been a splendid setting and venue for shared community outdoor activities, sports events, cricket matches and fairs and as a setting for many memorable weddings and gatherings. The setting for the Remembrance Services around the war memorial overlooking the church meadow and the River Brett is pertinent to that occasion, and it has proved to be an ideal location for the Rogation services that have taken place in Semer. The church grounds maintenance event in July has become an occasion of shared social activity and community celebration. There has been a church in Semer for over a thousand years, and it is beautifully sited on raised ground adjacent to the river Brett. The existing medieval church building dates from the 14th Century, but the chancel, roof and south porch were completely remodelled in the late 19th Century, mainly by the Cooke family who served as Rectors in Semer between 1731 and 1892. Their legacy is an expanse of well-polished carved woodwork, pews, pulpit, rood screen and choir stalls contributing to a notably spacious Victorian interior for such a relatively small church. There is a distinctive and rare organ that is maintained in good order and is capable of impressing the congregation and audiences when played with aplomb.

ST MARY'S, NEDGING

Nedging with Naughton is one civic parish with two churches, each with its own PCC.

Nedging's population of 335 lives in largely private housing but with some rented and social accommodation spread over a wide area surrounded by agricultural land. Unemployment levels are low but approximately 19% of people in the village are aged over 65. There is no obvious village 'centre'. Nedging Tye has a garage that sells fuel and carries out repairs and there is also a light industrial estate with businesses such as plant hire and manufacturing. The Village Hall is in Nedging and is host to several fund raising events for the Parish Council and the Village Hall, both of which have made donations to the two parish churches.

The Grade 1 13th century parish church is at the west end of the village, some distance from the bulk of the population, who are geographically closer to Naughton church. It can seat 70 (a few more when we add chairs) and is a small, simple medieval church with a fine south doorway, C14th roof, distinct North Door, C15th font with wooden Jacobean cover (regarded as exceptionally good) and seven C15th benches. The rest of the pews are Victorian, as is the pulpit. There are two bells, although only one can be rung, as the other is a precious C14 "Dawe" bell.

Services currently alternate between the two parishes on a weekly basis, and special services such as Mothering Sunday, Rogation and Remembrance Services alternate on an annual basis. Each church has its own Harvest Festival and Carol Services. Worship is generally traditional but BCP has now been superseded by CW services. Active involvement in church life by farming families in the parish means that rural services such as Rogation and Harvest Festival are popular and well attended. We do not like 'bells and smells' and we are not good at the Peace! We donate our Harvest Festival produce to the Bildeston Foodbank and have a box for donations to them permanently in the porch. Our Carol Service collection goes to The Children's Society. We run a Bazaar every Christmas and a bi-annual Fete at Nedging Hall along with Coffee Mornings and other one-off fund-raising events.



ST MARY'S, NAUGHTON



Naughton has approximately 78 residents who live mainly in private housing, our small village is surrounded by agricultural land and the church is situated within the conservation area. The Wheelhouse is the only pub in the village, which is located close to the village green.

St. Mary's Church is a small country church, which seats 80 people and is located on the village green. It was built in the 14th century of flint and stone with a castellated tower and a single bell cast in Bury St Edmunds in 1618. The font is 12th century of Norman origin and there are three medieval wall paintings including one of St Christopher and the Christ Child. The ancient organ is a rare example, built by Robert Grey in 1777. The 17th Century benches at the rear of the church are known as the 'rockers' – although they stand firm now!

At Naughton Church, we are friendly and welcoming to all who either attend the services or visit our small church and always advertise our services on a board on the village green to encourage new visitors. We hold a traditional May Fayre each year as a major fundraiser for the church and many people in the community are involved in this popular event, which has been running since 1991. Members of the PCC support a variety of other events in the village which are held at Nedging with Naughton Village Hall. A donation is given to the local food bank in Bildeston each year from our traditional Harvest Festival service. We work closely with Nedging Church and support each other in a variety of ways, including fund raising events and church services.



Current Weekly Sunday Services in the Benefice during the Interregnum

Week	Time	Church	Service
1	11.00 11.00	Semer or Bildeston Nedging or Naughton	Morning Prayer Holy Communion
2	11.00 11.00	Whatfield Nedging or Naughton	Holy Communion Morning Prayer
3	11.00 11.00	Nedging or Naughton Semer	Morning Prayer Holy Communion
4	11.00	Bildeston	Holy Communion
5	11.00	Services rotate around the Benefice	Benefice Holy Communion

Church Electoral Rolls as at 2023 APCMs

Parish	Village Population 2021 Census	Church Electoral Roll
Bildeston	1,096	33
Whatfield	335	27
Semer	130	32
Nedging	336	17
Naughton	68	12
Lindsey	208	14

Occasional Offices

2023

	Bildeston	Whatfield	Semer	Nedging	Naughton	Lindsey	TOTAL
Baptisms	1	0	1	1	0	0	3
Weddings	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
Funerals, Thanksgivings, Burial of Ashes	5	1	0	0	1	1	8

2022

	Bildeston	Whatfield	Semer	Nedging	Naughton	Lindsey	TOTAL
Baptisms	3	1	0	0	1	0	5
Weddings	0	0	2	0	1	0	3
Funerals, Thanksgivings, Burial of Ashes	11	2	1	2	1	2	19

2021

	Bildeston	Whatfield	Semer	Nedging	Naughton	Lindsey	TOTAL
Baptisms	1	1	1	1 (2 children)	0	0	4
Weddings	3	0	3	1 1 blessing	0	0	8
Funerals, Thanksgivings, Burial of Ashes	12	4	1	0	0	2	19

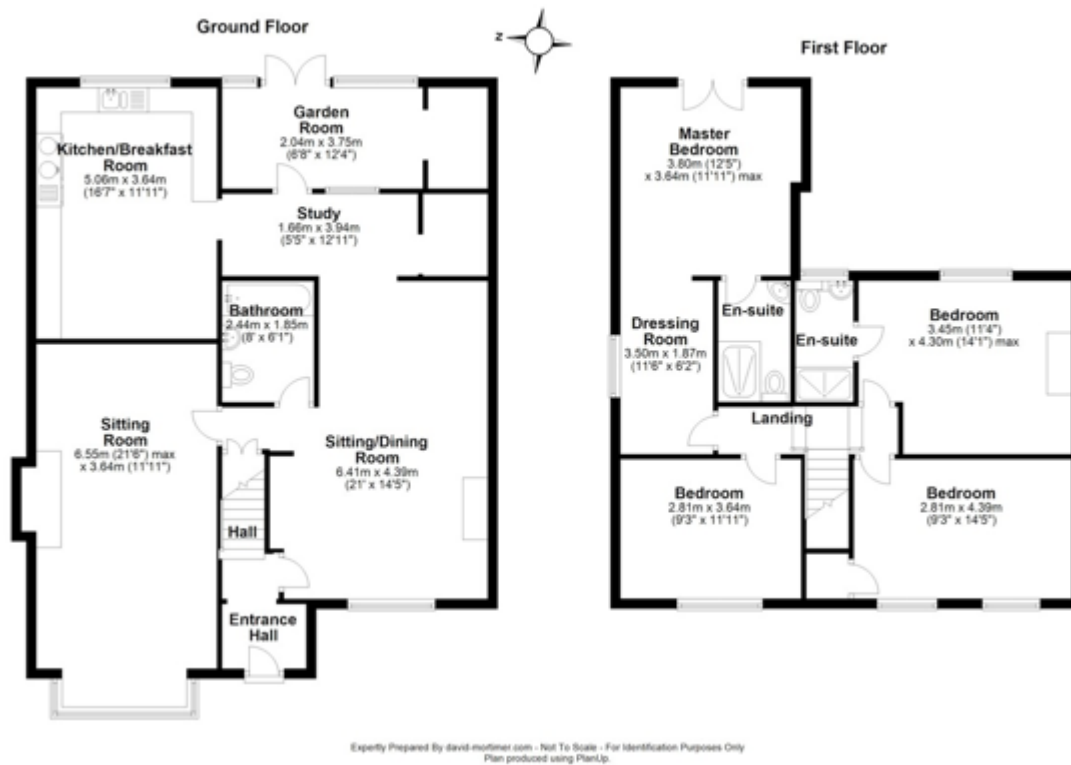
There have been no Confirmations during this period.

THE PARSONAGE HOUSE



The house was bought for the last Rector in 2019. It was described as being an exceptional semi-detached home set in charming, landscaped gardens. The accommodation includes sitting room, drawing room, Aga kitchen, four bedrooms (two en-suite) plus dressing room to the master. It has been extended and remodelled with wood burning stoves in the reception rooms.





The Ground floor has an entrance hall, drawing room with inglenook fireplace, sitting room with dining area at one end and sitting round the fireplace; kitchen with oak work surfaces; study area; utility room; garden room, boiler room for oil fired boiler and bathroom with shower over the bath.

The first floor has a master bedroom with Juliet balcony; dressing area; en-suite shower room; second double bedroom with cast iron fireplace and en-suite shower room; two further bedrooms.

The garden has a block paved parking area and a mature hedge to screen the house from the road. The enclosed rear gardens have a paved terrace, landscaped garden and sheltered seating area. Outhouses include a dog run, mower shed, greenhouse, store (with power and light) wood shed and summerhouse plus compost bins.

Mains water, electricity and drainage. Solar panels. Council tax Band C.

HADLEIGH DEANERY



The parishes of the Brett Valley benefice cover a geographically large area that stretches north in the deanery and are linked by their proximity and history.

Hadleigh Deanery is made up of 22 parishes with 21 churches and a total population nearing 22,000. The area is mainly rural with the growing market town of Hadleigh, accounting for half the population. However, each community, no matter how large or small in number, has a strong sense of identity.

The five benefices that make up the deanery have a total of five incumbent clergy, two on reduced stipend and three on full stipend, all of whom have been appointed within the last six years. The chapter meets monthly for encouragement and supportive advice. The Diocese and the deanery encourage the roles of reader and lay elder, as well as a host of other lay ministries that offer support and mission possibilities. The Deanery Synod meets three times a year and the Standing Committee, which includes incumbent clergy, similarly.

The Deanery Plan was agreed and approved in 2021 and, based around the Diocese "Growing In God", highlights many of the aspirations of the deanery and each benefice. The recent past has seen a stronger link between and within benefices, with a good deal of sharing of ideas and resources.

Financially the deanery is sound and has worked hard to ensure that, over recent years, it has achieved as near to full payment of the Deanery Share as possible. However, the recent pandemic and ageing congregations is proving a challenge to the future financial stability.

Likewise, there is much goodwill towards the churches and they are often still seen as a focal point of the community.

We welcome a new colleague and hope that whoever is appointed knows that they will find a welcoming chapter, a strong Deanery Team, encouragement and support.

The Very Rev Jo Delfgou, Rural Dean

THE DIOCESE OF ST. EDMUNDSBURY AND IPSWICH

Where are we?

The Diocese covers the county of Suffolk, excluding the area around Lowestoft in the north-east, and one parish in Essex. It is a mainly rural Diocese with a large number of small villages, plus market towns including Woodbridge, Halesworth, Sudbury and Beccles and the cathedral town of Bury St Edmunds with its historic ruins of the old Abbey. Ipswich is the county town with a population of about 137,000. Suffolk's population is c 650,000. The county embraces historic places of interest such as Sutton Hoo, culture at Snape with the famous annual Aldeburgh music festival, is on the Heritage coast and is a haven for lovers of natural history and birdlife. The busy port of Felixstowe is at the end of the A14 which runs via Cambridge to the Midlands and the A12 which gives access to London and the Norfolk Broads.

Who are we?

We are often known as 'the Church of England in Suffolk'. The diocesan bishop is the Right Reverend Martin Seeley, and the suffragan bishop is the Right Reverend Dr Mike Harrison. Both work from the Bishop's House in Ipswich. They work together closely to help us shape our vision and strategy, and amongst a plethora of other tasks offer regular teaching mornings to nurture the faith of people in our congregations – and a regular Vlog which can be found on Facebook. There are 3 archdeaconries and over 450 churches where visitors will find a wide range of worshipping styles, from the traditional to contemporary, as well as Fresh Expressions and growing numbers of 'Lightwave' groups for those who haven't connected with traditional church previously. The Cathedral of St Edmund and St James in Bury St Edmunds is the mother church of the Diocese and is proactive in offering support to clergy and parishes including welcoming parishes on pilgrimage. We also work closely with our 88 Church of England primary schools. All this is, of course, supported by a small and committed diocesan staff based in the diocesan office in Ipswich.

What is our vision?

Our diocesan vision is to be 'Growing in God', aiming to grow 'flourishing congregations making a difference'. This vision was accepted by

Diocesan Synod in 2014 and since then we have been focussing on four key priorities:

- Growing in Depth: responding to the call of Christ in every part of our lives
- Growing in Number: drawing the contacts we have into the life of God's kingdom
- Growing in Influence: reaching beyond ourselves in our impact on the wider world
- Growing Younger; building churches whose age-range reflects our communities

The logo for 'Growing in God' features the words 'Growing in God' in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. A small green sprout with two leaves is positioned above the letter 'o' in 'Growing'.

Parishes are encouraged to use a simple Mission Action Planning tool to help us all to focus on these priorities and how they might be worked out in each different context. We are trusting God that this vision, underpinned by a commitment to Christian stewardship, will bear fruit as we look to the future.

As part of this vision, we have recently received Strategic Development Funding for two major projects: Inspiring Ipswich, overseen by the Archdeacon of Ipswich which aims to grow the church in Ipswich through church planting and reaching out to those who live in the town, and 'Growing God in the Countryside', overseen by the Archdeacon for Rural Mission. This focusses on nurturing and discipling new Christians through small Lightwave groups and hubs such as the one being established at Bungay. (The Growing in God in the Countryside project plan is available among the documents at www.light-wave.org/vacancies)

We have also been part of a pilot scheme exploring how we can use our church buildings more creatively both for those who worship regularly and for the benefit of our communities and many churches have benefitted from this.

We are broadening our vision through a growing partnership with the Diocese of Kagera in Tanzania, with fruitful visits and links being established.

How can we fulfil our “Growing in God” vision?

We value our huge range of different ministries: we have over 100 stipendiary clergy, plus many SSM and PTO clergy as well as lay and ordained chaplains who can be found in such diverse places as schools, prisons, hospitals, hospices, the army, RAF and the police. Some clergy are ordained to serve in their local benefice through our pioneering 'auxiliary

ordination pathway' which enables people's vocations to ordained ministry to be discerned within the Diocese.

All clergy work alongside lay ministers – Readers, elders, and the growing number people exercising recently introduced licensed ministries: pioneer ministers, evangelists, youth ministers and children's and family workers. Our ministry deployment principles encourage teams or clusters of lay and ordained ministers to work together so that clergy feel less isolated and ministry resources the mission of the church more effectively. We are just beginning to develop the principle of 'local ministers' in our benefices, releasing people's gifts to serve in their locality.

We are excited about these new developments which are playing an important part in our diocesan vision of Growing in God.

So, in summary:

As our Growing in God vision states, we aspire to be people who know that 'God is with us, gathering us as Christ-centred communities, calling us to make Christian disciples, sending us in loving service, empowering us by the Holy Spirit'.



The diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich strongly encourages all incumbents to promote the growth of small missional groups and fresh expressions of Church in their benefices. "Lightwave" has been created with a diocese-wide Bishops Mission Order in order to support clergy and lay people to work together in mission-shaped communities, reaching out in innovative ways.

The Lightwave Community meets in small groups in homes, pubs, offices, schools and other places and complements other ways of being church. The name of the community comes from the idea of lightwaves being the way in which light spreads into dark places. Lightwave is committed to shining the light of Jesus in Suffolk through acts of kindness and practical service as well as worship and witness.

Each lightwave group aims to do one activity together to bless their local community and to share faith in their locality or network. Each group receives support and training in their outreach through a growing network of coaches. Each is mainly concerned to bless people who are exploring faith for the first time, while simultaneously cooperating closely with local parish churches and others. The Lightwave Community is being developed through a Project called "Growing in God in the

Countryside” funded by the Strategic Development Unit of the Church Commissioners until 2025. While both urban and rural Christians are part of this community, there is a particular focus on helping 1500 new disciples come to faith in rural areas in the period of the funding. Many Lightwave groups are planting fresh expressions of Church. The understanding is that such fresh expressions of Church will be new or different ways of being established primarily for the benefit of people who are not yet members of any church.

The Lightwave Community is developing three Rural Hub Churches, in different parts of rural Suffolk These create and support the development of the small missional groups in the whole surrounding area and to intentionally provide sufficient critical mass for particular ministries which are currently under-represented in rural churches, for example with young adults and those in lower income brackets.

The Lightwave chaplaincy team support those involved in farming and rural business. Every part of the Lightwave Community has a vision for the great wave of God’s love, bringing light to our county.

loverural

making Jesus visible through loving action

Loverural is about “making Jesus visible through loving action” in the Suffolk Countryside. It is part of the diocese’s strong commitment to rural areas. Loverural has 3 strands:-

- a) Drawing attention to the enormous role of the rural Christianity in building social capital
- b) Acting as a convenor for projects and congregations in the countryside including those of different streams and denominations so that good rural practice can be shared, and mutual support offered
- c) Enabling those engaged in Christian-based social action to gain confidence and wisdom in how to make exploration of the Christian faith accessible to those engaging with their initiatives

www.lightwave.community

For further details about the Diocese, please go to: www.cofesuffolk.org