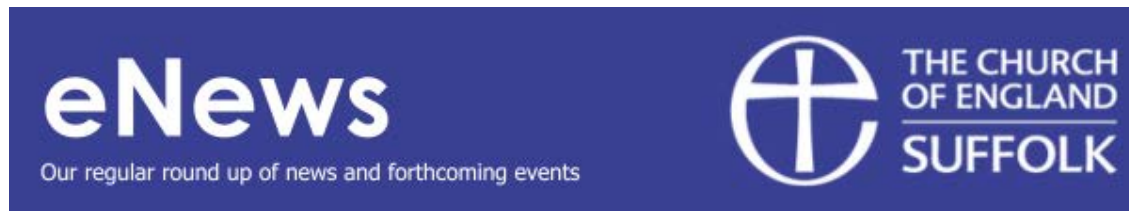


**Thursday 31 July 2025**



**'We provide a productive space between home and prison,' says HMP Chaplain**



HMP Highpoint in Suffolk has one of the largest prison chaplaincy teams in the UK – providing vital pastoral care for prisoners, their families and staff.

The Revd Wendy Norris has led the chaplaincy team since November 2023, making sure every prisoner, no matter what their faith, or if they have none, has access to religious materials and a safe space to worship. *"I am not a*

*prisoner chaplain, I am a prison chaplain,"* she said. *"I'm here for the prisoners, but also their families and the staff who work here."*

*"Most of our work is based around pastoral care, caring for men in crisis or who are vulnerable, but we are also embedded in the managerial side of the prison. We are seen as part of the leadership of the whole prison, giving our view on how it is run and sometimes speaking truth to power. We help support prisoners who are dealing with family and life issues and coming to terms with why they are in here. Most want to change their lives."*

Read the full story on our [website here](#).

**The Joy of Christmas**



Are you starting to plan ahead for Advent and Christmas? We're excited to share that the Church of England's theme for 2025 revolves round a single word: Joy!

Last week the Church of England Digital Team held their first Christmas webinar of 2025 and you can find the [recording of the full webinar here on YouTube](#). Find out more about this year's theme - The Joy of Christmas

- at [cofe.io/TheJoyOfChristmas](https://cofe.io/TheJoyOfChristmas). More resources will be added to website over the coming weeks.

If you would like to participate in a Digital Growth Programme, the team are offering an opportunity for churches to:

- Receive tailored support from our Digital, Giving and Vision & Strategy teams
- Benefit from interactive calls and resources focusing on social media, digital content creation, planning and measuring activities, and for continuing to reach their local community in the new year
- Be equipped from August-early October, leaving them with plenty of time to put their learning into practice
- Learn alongside other churches, with the opportunity for dialogue and sharing creative ideas together

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## **National Safeguarding Audit**

The independent safeguarding audit programme for the Church of England was commissioned by the Archbishops' Council and is overseen by the Church of England's National Safeguarding Team (NST). Led by the INEQE Safeguarding Group and working to a consistent framework, the audits test the sufficiency of safeguarding arrangements within CofE dioceses and cathedrals.

The audit for the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich has begun with evidence gathering from the last 12 months. This must be submitted to INEQE by 6 August 2025. INEQE will then visit the Diocese in the autumn to carry out in-person interviews. Can you help us with the audit?

As part of the collection of evidence INEQE has requested that we ask people to complete a survey with their views on safeguarding in the Diocese. The surveys are anonymous and will only be seen by the auditors. A summary of findings will be included in the final report. There are several surveys to represent the diverse groups of people across the Diocese. Please complete any which you feel are applicable to you, the link below will take you to the surveys, where you can choose the one(s) relevant to you.

All audit surveys need to be submitted by 6 August 2025.

[Click here to take part in the survey.](#)

## **Events**

### **Churchwardens' Training 2025**

Tuesday 5 August | 7.00pm | St Peter's Church, Stoke Park Drive, Ipswich IP2 9TH

Thursday 7 August | 7.00pm | St Luke's Church, Rigbourne Hill, Beccles NR34 9JQ

Monday 11 August | 7.00pm | Cockfield Village Hall, Church Lane, IP30 0LA

These training sessions are aimed at all churchwardens, whether you are new or have been in post for some time. The session covers churchwardens' tasks and legal responsibilities, issues about building maintenance and faculties and many other related issues.

Events will be led by the Archdeacon with contributions from the Diocesan Registrar. There is an opportunity for questions and to meet your fellow churchwardens. There are sessions in each archdeaconry and you are welcome to attend the most convenient session, even if outside your archdeaconry. Please book [here](#).

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### **JAMZ Christian Music Festival**

Saturday 9 August, 2.00pm-7.00pm | The Severals Sports Pavilion, Newmarket CB8 7BS

All Saints' Church in Newmarket invite you to a day long festival of Christian music sponsored by Churches Together Newmarket District. Join them for live music, food, drinks and fun for the whole family!

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### **Eco Day**

Saturday 30 August, 2.00pm | St Mary's Church, Parish Room, Great Blakenham IP6 0LN

St Mary's Church, Great Blakenham has recently achieved an Eco Church Silver Award and in the wake of this, church members are organising an Eco information day to inspire others with ideas to help the environment and the planet. There will be stalls with Eco information and products. Details from [wendyatstmaryschurch@gmail.com](mailto:wendyatstmaryschurch@gmail.com). All are welcome.

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### **Church of England Talk Series**

All starting at 7.30pm | Ipswich Minster IP1 3BN or on YouTube [here](#)

Join this new talk series offering a blend of established and emerging theologians, writers and commentators, all exploring what a good Church of England should look like for the nation it seeks to serve.

Wednesday 3 September | The Revd Canon Prof James Walters, London School of Economics | A Nation in Crisis

Thursday 11 September | The Revd Dr Kirsty Northwick, University of Oxford | The Academy and the Pursuit of Knowledge

Thursday 25 September | Fr Dragos Herescu, Cambridge Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies | Ecumenism: a perspective from the Orthodox Church

Wednesday 15 October | The Revd Dr James Hawkey, Canon Theologian of Westminster Abbey | The English Constitution

Wednesday 12 November | Miriam Lorie, Rabbi of Kehillat Nashira | A perspective from Judaism

Wednesday 26 November | The Revd Kiran Lotay, Mission Priest | Urban Estates

There will be a Q&A session after the talk and for those attending the Minster refreshments will be served. All welcome, no booking required. To find out more please visit [Ipswich Minster on Facebook here](#).

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### **Grandparents' Day - 'What does it take to be a Grandparent of Faith?'**

Saturday 6 September, doors open 10.00am for a 10.30am start – 2.30pm | Fressingfield Baptist Church, Fressingfield IP21 5RU

This event is organised by the Mothers' Union with the diocesan Growing Younger team and is open to everyone. The day is designed to bring together grandparents and honorary grandparents of faith (from little faith to strong faith) and of any denomination. So that

through a programme which includes worship, key speakers and small group workshops, participants will feel supported, encouraged and affirmed as a spiritual influencer to their grandchildren. Tickets are free and available [here](#).

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## Digital Surgeries

Join members of the Parish Resources Team to find out more about enhancing the digital giving presence in your parish. Come along and have a one-to-one session with one of our Giving Advisors to find out about purchasing or borrowing a contactless device, setting up online giving (including QR codes), get your contactless device repaired or updated with new campaigns, and finding out how to have an effective online giving presence on your ACNY or website pages. For more information email [Emma Denton](#) or [Emma Rowlinson](#), Diocesan Giving Advisors.

Thursday 11 September – Beccles, St Michael's from 10.00am - 12.00pm and 2.00pm - 4.00pm | [Book here](#)

Wednesday 5 November - Diocesan Office, 4 Cutler Street, Ipswich from 2.00pm - 4.00pm | [Book here](#)

Tuesday 18 November – St Edmundsbury Cathedral from 10.00am - 12.00pm and 2.00pm - 4.00pm | [Book here](#)

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## Suffolk Churches Ride and Stride - Saturday 13 September



Walkers, cyclists, runners and vintage or classic car owners are invited to sign up to join others who love Suffolk and history at the annual September event, organised by Suffolk Historic Churches Trust

(SHCT). Last year, the day's fundraising raised £200,000 and, from the proceeds, the SHCT gave grants to Suffolk's historic churches, chapels and meeting houses who need to make urgent repairs or improvements to their buildings. Sponsor forms are now available in Suffolk churches and from the Trust. Full details are available on their website: [www.shct.org.uk](http://www.shct.org.uk). Car owners should email [pedalanddrive@gmail.com](mailto:pedalanddrive@gmail.com). Donations and sponsorship can also be collected via Just Giving. We look forward to a great day of fundraising!

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## Living the Story- Exploring Our Vocation Together

Tuesday 23 September, 7.00pm - 8.30pm | Earl Stonham Village Hall, Stowmarket IP14 5HJ



The first of four free in-person sessions exploring God's call on our lives to love and serve him. Each session will be rooted in the scriptures and some of the topics we'll be thinking about are: How does God call? Who does God call? How does God speak to us? and How do we listen to God?

The course will be led by the Ven Vanessa Herrick and our Diocesan Director of Ordinands, the Revd Canon Stuart Batten, and is intended for everyone – whatever stage of the vocation journey you are at.

The sessions are all on Tuesdays from 7.00 – 8.30pm on 23 September, 30 September, 14 October and 4 November. To book please visit Insight [here](#).

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## LoveRural - National Rural Mission Conference 2025

Monday 22 September, 11.30am and Tuesday 23 September, 3.00pm | St Edmundsbury Cathedral, Bury St Edmunds IP33 1LS



Join the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich for this national gathering to thank God for the ways in which he is making new disciples in rural contexts and reflect on key learning. This event will bring together senior leaders, pioneers, rural resource church leaders and other partners. We will share learnings from rural Strategic Development Funded (SDF) projects, including Suffolk's "Growing in God in the Countryside" and the national "Rural Resourcing Church Learning Community". There will be opportunities to connect and pray with others and explore developments in rural mission. [To book please click here.](#)

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## Line Management Skills for Incumbents

Wednesday 15 October, 10.00am | The Sanctuary, Diocesan Office, Ipswich IP1 1UQ

A training day exploring good people management practice for incumbents who manage employees such as administrators, children's and families' workers, youth workers, and others. Led by the Diocese's People Director, Penny Longford, and Diocesan Mission Enabler, the Revd Katie de Bourcier, it will explore good practice and employment law to help you manage people well so that they flourish in their roles and contribute to the life and growth of their parish(es). Only 20 spaces are available, to book click [here](#). Please ensure you are logged into Insight to book this session. For further information please contact Vanessa Kidd, [vanessa.kidd@cofesuffolk.org](mailto:vanessa.kidd@cofesuffolk.org) or call 07394 568406.

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## Chaplaincy Day

Tuesday 21 October, 9.30am to 3.30pm | All Saints' Church, Kesgrave IP5 1AA



We are holding a Chaplaincy Gathering for chaplains in service across Suffolk in all sectors – a fantastic opportunity to network with others. The keynote speaker will be The Revd Canon (Sqn Ldr) Matt Buchan, Station Chaplain at RAF Marham. Other chaplains and diocesan staff will also be providing input.

Registration begins at 9.30am when you will be welcomed with coffee, then the first session will begin at 10.00am. A light lunch will be provided. Please sign up

[here](#) and share this link with your chaplaincy team so they can register and join us too.

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## Understanding Shame Workshop

Friday 3 October 2025, 9.00am - 4.00pm | St Andrew's Church Hall, Rushmere St Andrew, Ipswich IP5 1DH

This workshop will offer a safe and confidential space to explore and learn about the subject of shame and will give you the opportunity to build resilience against this powerful emotion. Giving you the opportunity to work individually and together, this workshop will help you better support the people you work with and care for and will offer a time for personal development and growth. Should you require further information please email Inspire on [contact@inspirecounselling.org.uk](mailto:contact@inspirecounselling.org.uk).

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## Understanding and Working with Relationships and Family Dynamics

Friday 28 November, 9.00am - 4.00pm | St Andrew's Church Hall, Rushmere St Andrew, Ipswich IP5 1DH

The day will be interactive and experiential, exploring approaches to understanding the human need for relationships and the powerful unconscious dynamics that occur within families, working with divorce/separation and working with endings. Should you require further information please email Inspire on [contact@inspirecounselling.org.uk](mailto:contact@inspirecounselling.org.uk).

### Notices

**Growth Fund Opportunities:** The Diocesan Growth Fund offers grants of up to £1,500 to churches to support them in implementing their Plans for Growth. Parishes are using this funding in all sorts of creative ways to take forward mission in their local communities. We'd love to receive applications from more churches, especially those who haven't applied before. To find out more about the Growth Fund visit our website [here](#).

**Articles of Enquiry:** Each year we ask churchwardens to fill in a short survey about their church and parish. The survey provides a useful insight into current church life across Suffolk. The survey is now live for you to complete on the Online Parish Return System (OPRS) and can be accessed [here](#). If you have any queries completing the survey, please email [statistics@cofesuffolk.org](mailto:statistics@cofesuffolk.org)

### Vacancies

[Finance Administrator](#) | Diocesan Office | Closing date: 13 August

[Safeguarding Trainer and Training Coordinator](#) | Diocesan Office | Closing date: 15 August

[Finance Administrator](#) | Inspire Counselling and Training | Closing date: 26 August

[Team Vicar](#) | Sole Bay Team | Closing date: 1 September

[Risk, Audit and Review Committee Chair](#) | St Edmundsbury Cathedral

Part-time Youth Worker | All Saints' Church, Ipswich | Please [email here](#) for more information

Treasurer | All Saints' Church, Thorndon | Closing date: 30 November | Please [email here](#) for more information.

[Associate Chaplain Opportunity](#) | [Click here for more information](#)

**Click here to print and share with others**



## Watch our stories from around Suffolk



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