



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
**Diocese of St Edmundsbury
and Ipswich**

Lark Valley & North Bury Team Ministry

www.northburychurches.org.uk

Team Rector





What we can offer

A very significant benefice within the life of the Diocese. It contains a range of rural and urban parishes with a wide variety of worship styles, prepared to embrace change.



An experienced and supportive team of clergy including a Team Vicar who is House for Duty, an Assistant Priest (SSM), an assistant curate (SSM), four PTO clergy and one Reader. The DDO & Director of New Ministries is resident in one of the Lark Valley villages and is able to assist monthly. Also there are two Commissioned Lay Elders.



The expectation of the appointment of a full time Team Vicar, once the Rector is in post.

A modern team office with considerable volunteer lay support for administration and the plan to recruit paid administration.

A detached, modern, four bedroomed house on the edge of a thriving market town with the Cathedral.

The possibility of the Rural Dean role.

What we are hoping for in our new Team Rector

A strategic and creative leader in mission who can embrace the breadth of traditional and contemporary worship whilst allowing each church to honour its distinctiveness, from Catholic to Cafe.

An inspiring preacher and teacher rooted in scripture and keen to nurture others in prayer and discipleship.

A person committed to attracting and developing ministry amongst children, young people and families in both rural and urban settings, with an ability to recognize that village churches are churches for the whole community, often having their own special historical customs.

A person who is not only able to lead a team but also to work flexibly and supportively with the lay and ordained members.

A person who is willing to make contact with all aspects of community life.



THE LOCAL SETTING

The map on page 15 shows where the Benefice is in Suffolk. To find the location of each of the churches within the Benefice see the team website: www.northburychurches.org.uk then go to 'Contact' and click on 'Location Maps'.



The town

Bury St Edmunds is an attractive market and cathedral town whose population continues to expand and now exceeds 35,000. It retains a large rural hinterland and therefore has more social and cultural facilities than its size might suggest. The town is generally prosperous, although the Benefice has some of the more deprived wards in West Suffolk.

The population of Bury St Edmunds has historically drawn from Suffolk and post-war London overspill. It has recently become more diverse, and includes growing Muslim, Portuguese and East European communities. The North Bury Team (NBT) Benefice came into being in 2002, and comprises the three parishes of All Saints, St John and St George, with a population of approximately 26,000 in the northern half of the town. This is expanding with Marham Park's 1100 new houses, the planned development adjoining Westley of 450 houses and the re-sited hospital. The Lark Valley Benefice, with its seven churches and population of approximately 3,000, was a united benefice from 1997, and has been run together with the NBT since December 2014. The new Lark Valley and North Bury Team Ministry, with its 10 churches became a legal formality in 2019. Within the Lark Valley are the redundant Churches Conservation Trust church of All Saints Wordwell, the ancient church of St John Lateran and the private chapel at Hengrave Hall, where we are invited to conduct services of blessing after civil marriage in the Hall.

The variety of housing in the town is reflected in the benefice by: four former council estates (now owner-occupier and social housing); Victorian and Edwardian housing close to the town centre; semi-detached and detached suburban housing; streets of small Victorian artisan housing; and new infill housing built on brown-field sites. The town is well served by public transport and cycle paths, with good east-west road and rail links (Cambridge, Ely and Ipswich are all approximately 30 miles away). The villages range from the town-edge commuter-rural to four remoter villages of 100-150 dwellings, and one of just twenty. Culford School is a major feature in its village where the parish church is also the school chapel.

Major employers include the West Suffolk Hospital, British Sugar, Greene King brewers, local government and light industry. The West Suffolk Hospital includes general, mental health, A & E and children's wards, and St Nicholas' Hospice shares the same site. There is a well-established private hospital in the town. The team area includes several GP surgeries and dental practices.

Within North Bury there are four primary schools (one CE Voluntary Aided), a middle school (academy), three upper schools (one CE Voluntary Controlled, one RC, one academy) and West Suffolk College & University campus. There are no schools in the Lark Valley parishes, apart from Culford School (independent, Methodist Foundation, with its own chaplain), no shops or garages, no doctor or health-centre, and just two public houses, one hotel, and three golf courses.

Rectory Address: 59 Bennett Avenue, Bury St Edmunds, IP33 3JJ

THE NEW TEAM MINISTRY

Prior to the creation of the North Bury Team Ministry in 2002, St John's and St George's had shared a priest-in-charge for 5 years, and the vicar of All Saints became the first team rector. The North Bury Team and Lark Valley Benefice have shared a ministry team for the past five years. The Pastoral Reorganisation uniting the two came into effect in 2019, creating the Lark Valley and North Bury Team Ministry, which is within the Thingoe Deanery.

The new team ministry comprises ten parishes, each of which has its own PCC. The following information reflects the pre Covid-19 situation.

St John the Evangelist, Bury St Edmunds



The church is near the centre and market place of the town, on St John's Street. It was built in 1841 and serves the town's retail, industrial and transport quarter. Of the three town churches, St John's has the most obvious identity. It developed a Tractarian tradition in the nineteenth century, and now represents the affirming and inclusive strands of the Anglican Catholic tradition (for more details please see www.stjohnsburystedmunds.co.uk).

St John's observes all feast days and festivals and hosts a Walsingham Cell. It also celebrates with the monthly 'World of Worship' service.

St John's has a mixed age range, which veers towards the elderly.

The church is used by many choirs and organisations, it has an excellent acoustic and so is a good concert venue. It has been host to town trails and exhibitions. The church is open every day for quiet prayer and reflection.

St George, Bury St Edmunds



The church stands on Anselm Avenue, on the northern edge of the town. The church opened in 1951 and serves two post-war former council-housing estates (Mildenhall Road & Howard), and it includes the new development at Marham Park.

St George's has the smallest town congregation, most being elderly who live in the parish, with low car-ownership. They may be small in numbers, but they are very active and put on many concerts, fayres and seasonal services.

An active craft group meets monthly in the vicarage, next door to the church.

All Saints, Bury St Edmunds

The church is on Park Road, at a high point of the town near the water tower. The church began in 1953 and serves the western and more suburban area of the town benefices, including two housing estates with significant social challenges.

Most worshippers at All Saints are older, with some younger families and young people. While the services are formal and the pattern is conventional, there is an evangelical component to the church spirituality and commitment to mission, with individuals seeking to grow in faith. The church accommodates people from a variety of social and spiritual backgrounds.



Church activities include a Monday Café in church; an Over 60s Fellowship Group; Toddler Group including a monthly Mini Messy Church and Singing for Fun. The church hosts a monthly Parish Lunch in the hall which is open to all across the team. A group of lay people from All Saints visit Sextons Manor Community Primary School fortnightly as part of the *Open the Book Project*, which presents Bible stories as part of collective worship.

The church and hall buildings also host many community activities. Choirs and musicians often choose All Saints for their performances because it is warm, comfortable and has a car park!

All Saints, Fornham All Saints



The church occupies a prominent position in the village and is well cared for by the community. The village itself has a pub, restaurant, small businesses and a coffee shop.

A 13th century church with a young heart. Improvements over the years include individual pew seating, kitchen area, toilet extension, floodlights, and a recently replastered and decorated ceiling. A church that caters for all ages.

All Saints has a well attended Family Service at the start of each month, with a worship band. Families are also ministered to through Messy Church which takes place during school holidays. The adults enjoy it as much as the children!

An assisted living complex, Thingoe Lodge, is located behind the church. Once a month, assisted by the Church, there is a Tea for the residents and the wider community, which is greatly enjoyed. There is also a monthly Evening Praise service which is equally well supported by residents and villagers.

St Martin, Fornham St Martin

The present church building is 14C, replacing an earlier 12C one, and is situated on the main road through the village, next to The Woolpack pub.

With a well maintained and laid out churchyard, the first impression in entering through the red brick Tudor porch, is the mass of brightly coloured hassocks on all the pews, made by parishioners in about 1983, and a warm welcome awaits, as well as a spiritual peace with the church open every day. Most worshippers are over 50, for the weekly services.



The church family is active in the village community, with weekly communion services in the Fornham House Residential Home, for some 20 residents, and well supported Festival Services.

Social fund raising events are held throughout the year. Our current major project is to restore and enhance the bells in the tower, with improvements to the belfry, and fund raising is well underway.

St Mary, Culford



The church is to be found in the parkland of Culford Independent School, next to the old Hall. The School uses the church regularly for its own services and there is a good relationship between the two communities.

Clergy have in the past gone into Culford Pre-Prep fortnightly to engage the children through reflective storytelling, and the children are involved in decorating the church for major festivals. They do a beautiful job!

Many past pupils come back to get married in their old School Church, as do local people as the old Hall provides a wonderful Wedding Reception venue. The church has a real ministry to these couples who are always impressed by the warm welcome that they receive.

St Lawrence, Lackford

St Lawrence is situated on the edge of Suffolk Wildlife Trust's Lackford Lakes. The church is in a beautiful position on a walk between the Lakes and the village, people often stop to admire it. Unfortunately its position away from the village means that it cannot be left unlocked every day, as most of our other churches are.



The church recently reordered the west end to provide a kitchen, toilet and tower meeting room, giving a community space for the village. In the spring and summer a weekly 'Coffee and Catch Up' in the church sees a regular group of villagers coming together.

Lackford hosts the annual Pet Service for the Benefice in July, which is always well attended by well-behaved pets and people alike!

St Andrew, Timworth



St. Andrew's Church is situated at the end of Church Lane, which is just off the road through the small village of Timworth. It is located in a beautiful rural setting, where dog walkers and ramblers often sit and rest on the churchyard bench, as it is such a peaceful spot.

Timworth has a long-standing tradition of providing services using the Book of Common Prayer, celebrating Holy Communion and Matins each month.

Coffee and cakes are served after each service, which provides the opportunity for the congregation to socialise and to welcome anyone attending for the first time.

St Catherine, Flempton

St Catherine's is the parish church for the villages of Flempton and Hengrave. It sits on the crossroads in Flempton and is the only community space in the village. The churchyard is managed for wildlife and is home to many wildflowers, insects, birds and snakes.



A wedding at nearby Hengrave

St Mary, West Stow and Wordwell



St Mary's, West Stow, is well loved. It is very much part of the community and has a "Carols round the tree" service each year for the village. The Family Service at the start of the month begins with breakfast.

The church is a mainly 14th and 15th century building sitting in the heart of the village, which is in a conservation area and situated in beautiful open countryside. The church has a peal of six bells and a well maintained churchyard of some three acres.

The servery in the vestry has been upgraded, a composting lavatory has been installed, and the west end of the church has been reordered to provide a flexible space with accompanying modern furniture.

St Mary's is fortunate in having sound financial resources. An events committee organises fund-raising events. A monthly charity lunch is held with 50% of proceeds going to charities peculiar to Bury St Edmunds.



In the tiny village of Wordwell All Saints Church is in the care of The Churches Conservation Trust and is well worth a visit. It has up to six services each year.

WORSHIP

There is an eclectic mix of spiritualities across the benefices, with people who feel at home with Celtic and Taize worship, Walsingham, Spring Harvest and Greenbelt. Generally it can be said that we put energy and resources into our music ministry. All our churches welcome the full ministry of women.

The pre Covid-19 pattern of Sunday and weekday services is shown below, all services are Common Worship unless indicated. Seasonal changes and additions are as announced, with the full keeping of Holy Week.

Sunday	8am	Holy Communion (BCP)	All Saints, & Lark Valley
	9.30am	Parish Communion (Family Service 2 nd Sunday) Parish Communion	St George All Saints
	9.30am	Holy Communion (BCP) 1st Sunday, Matins (BCP) & Sermon 3 rd Sunday	Timworth
	10am	Family Communion except Family Services FAS (1 st Sundays) & West Stow (3 rd Sunday)	Lark Valley
	10.30am	Family Service (3 rd Sunday) followed by Team Lunch	All Saints
	11am	Sung Eucharist	St John
	3pm	Invitation services and events as announced	St George
	6pm	Periodic Benefice Evensong (BCP) & Sermon followed by refreshments	Lark Valley
	6pm	'A World of Worship' – Taize, Celtic, contemporary styles of prayer (4 th Sunday) Choral Evensong (BCP) & Sermon (5 th Sunday)	St John St John
Monday	8.30am	Morning Prayer	All Saints
	6pm	Eucharist	St John
Tuesday	8.30am	Morning Prayer	St George
	10am	Eucharist	Fornhams
	6.00pm	Meditation	St John
Wednesday	8.30am	Morning Prayer	St John
	9.30am	Eucharist	St John
	10am	Mini Messy Church (1 st week)	All Saints
Thursday	8.30am	Morning Prayer	All Saints
	9.30am	Eucharist (1 st & 3 rd BCP)	All Saints
	3.30pm	'Small Church'	St Eds VCP
Friday	7.30am	Eucharist	St John
	5.30pm	Evening Prayer	St John
	6pm	Stations of the Cross (Lent)	St John
Saturday	10am	Saints' Day and Walsingham monthly Eucharists	St John

Statistics 2019

Name of church	Electoral roll	Usual Sunday Attendance	Baptisms	Weddings	Funerals
All Saints', Bury	64	48	5	1	3
St George's	31	15	1	0	2
St John's	54	32	3	1	4
Culford	20	18	3	4	3
Flempton	6	3	0	0	0
Fornham All Saints	44	27	7	0	8
Fornham St Martin	27	20	0	1	5
Lackford	10	9	1	0	1
Timworth	18	11	0	0	0
West Stow	16	18	2	3	1

Funerals are also conducted at the local West Suffolk Crematorium, and Borough Cemetery - 100 per annum. Divorced people are remarried in consultation with the Bishop, and the team maintains an open and encouraging position regarding the administration of Holy Baptism, admission to Holy Communion from the age of seven, but candidates for Confirmation are few and far between. There is a possibility that a termly school Eucharist could be held at our local CEVAP school in the future.

MINISTRY AND MISSION

The Team sees ministry as the response of all baptised people to the call of God to serve his mission through the Church and in the world. Clergy and laity work together in such areas as pastoral care, ministry among children and families, leading worship, administration and routine maintenance. All the parishes have engaged with the diocesan 'Growing in God' initiative. The united Team Council, like the deanery synod, meets three times per annum. We have a calendar, published monthly, a monthly village magazine (Church-run) serving all seven Lark Valley villages, and we have a Team Newsletter. In the past, we have had pilgrimages, retreats, quiet days and other events which are planned into our Calendar. There is an annual Team retreat.

The Full Measure Project is an important part of church life in St John's and St George's. It is lay-led and encompasses Christian stewardship of money and non-specialist pastoral visiting, All Saints are similarly active with 'Giving in Grace'. The Lark Valley parishes are addressing regular and committed giving alongside legacy encouragement. Home and study groups are mostly lay-led. We

maintain a strong 'Praying Together' monthly prayer-cycle of all ten electoral rolls and 'wider belonging', alongside daily prayers for particular parts of the communities we seek to serve.

Our staff team of authorised ministers will consist of a Team Rector and two Team Vicars, one post currently vacant and one House for Duty Priest, an Assistant Priest (SSM), an Assistant Curate (SSM), four PTO clergy and one Reader. The DDO & Director of New Ministries is resident in one of the Lark Valley villages and is able to assist monthly. The staff team meets regularly and works collaboratively in a lively, hospitable and purposeful manner. It organises and reviews our worship, ministry and mission, and the weekly Pew Sheet. Other clergy who worship with us regularly and who have the Bishop's PTO (but who are not on the staff team) offer invaluable help with ministry and services. Two Lay Elders assist with pastoral ministry and some worship and we hold full 'ministry team' meetings from time-to-time.

Education

Members of the staff team and the congregations serve on the governing bodies of schools in the benefice. The clergy have considerable input into several schools via weekly/fortnightly Collective Worship or other classroom involvement, and are building and developing links across the town. All the primary and the one middle school hold seasonal services in team churches. We aspire to offer a sessional chaplaincy presence at the West Suffolk College & University campus. Church members contribute to the work of the joint Diocese/Cathedral sponsored Discovery Centre, which includes projects and storytelling in schools across the Diocese.

Children, young people and families

Work with children is concentrated at All Saints, it has a Parent and Toddler Group with monthly Mini Messy Church. We have after-school 'Small Church' at St Edmundsbury CEVAP and occasional Messy Church at St George's. Children can be prepared to receive Holy Communion before Confirmation in all our churches. There is at present no work with teenagers at any of our churches because of a combination of natural cycles and very successful youth ministry in other (non-Anglican) churches in Bury St Edmunds. We have the chance to share in that in the Anselm Centre at St George's, run by our Presbyterian colleagues.



Older people

All Saints Bury has a monthly Fellowship Group, which has talks and chat over a cup of tea. Clergy visit many of the local residential homes regularly, and provide Holy Communion for residents, one weekly and a number of others monthly. Members of the staff team and Lay Elders also take Holy Communion to the homes of those who are sick or housebound. Lay people are actively involved in giving lifts to church for those who would otherwise have difficulty in making their way to worship.

Health and healing

Following up the care of our own parishioners we regularly visit any who find themselves in West Suffolk Hospital, and two of our PTO clergy are volunteer chaplains at St Nicholas' Hospice. St John's has prayers for healing (including laying on of hands and anointing) monthly after the 3rd Sunday service. This is also offered at Fornham St Martin or Fornham All Saints at the 1st Tuesday 10am service.

Parish, Deanery and other organisations

St John's has a Walsingham Cell and links with Affirming Catholicism, Inclusive Church and the Guild of the Servants of the Sanctuary. Laity and clergy play an active part in the Deanery and in Churches Together in Bury St Edmunds and District, where we are involved in Christian Aid and regular learning events and courses. People from all our churches are involved in other organisations, including Mothers' Union, Samaritans, the Drop In Centre for homeless people, various choirs and the local Hospice.

Buildings and the wider community

St George's is linked to the Anselm Centre, a community centre which the church uses on Sundays. It is run by the local residents' association and we are represented at their management meetings. All Saints' Bury is linked to its own church hall and Osborne Room, which are used daily by a wide variety of church and community groups, and choirs. The Team Ministry Office is based at All Saints.

The former St John's Infant School, now The Centre, stands next to the church and has been substantially improved. It is run by an ecumenical trust, which employs a part-time Community Development Worker, and includes Just Traid, a Fairtrade shop and community café which is open five days a week.

Growing Church and nurturing faith

We use *Emmaus* and more recently *Pilgrim* nurture material among our congregations, as well as with those who are interested in learning more about Christian faith, to give members more confidence in speaking about their faith. St John's maintains a full stock of 'Gospel Imprint' leaflets, being a town-centre church open daily. The benefice has three Lent Groups each year, there are also Lent Lunches across the Lark Valley.

Staff Team members are encouraged to make at least one annual retreat, attend study days, and to take a designated but flexible rest-day. A Holidays and Time Away Calendar is maintained to assist in the planning of services and events.

Activities since the Covid-19 outbreak

During the time when church buildings were shut, the clergy and lay members within the Benefice have kept in regular contact with their congregations using the pastoral support systems. Orders of Service were distributed and a Viral Bulletin has been published each week which was sent to the Google group, with news and reflections. Several older people have had shopping delivered by younger members. Our two curates (now moved on) held midweek and weekend Facebook services each week and a Zoom service has been held on Sunday mornings. The churches are gradually reopening but it is hoped some form of online worship will be able to continue.

Parish Share and Expenses

Pre Covid-19 the Team Ministry has paid its Parish Share in full. Clergy expenses-of-office are also paid in full.

