

**Profile for the United Benefice of the Parishes of  
All Saints and St Wistan, Wigston Magna and St Thomas the Apostle, South Wigston**

**Welcome to The Wigston Benefice.**



## The Diocese Welcome



Thank you for your interest in this role. Please be assured that there are many people praying for this process of discernment, and we trust that you will know God's guidance as you explore whether it is right to apply.

As part of your consideration, it is important to understand that the Diocese of Leicester, like every diocese in the Church of England, is in transition. After a long process of discernment (a process which we called *Shaped by God Together* and which involved much prayer and literally hundreds of small group conversations in every part of the diocese), Diocesan Synod agreed a new framework for the diocese known as *Minster Communities*. ([see more on our website](#)). Anyone coming to work in the diocese therefore needs to be committed to engaging with this new framework and embedding it within the church communities they serve (understanding that it will be applied in different ways in different contexts) and be flexible and prayerful in discerning how their particular role fits and will evolve within this wider framework. This will be explored with you at interview, and, if you are appointed, will be a major part of the induction process.

In addition to this, we are on an exciting journey of learning about church planting and fresh expressions of church, and about intercultural mission and ministry – two areas where we have received substantial funding from the national church. We are also committed to exploring intergenerational work, reducing our impact on the environment, and crossing the divides both in the church and in the world. We therefore want people who are open to learning, who are humble in admitting that they don't have all the answers, and yet who are bold in proclaiming the Gospel in word and action.

These changes require not only considerable flexibility and adaptability from clergy and lay ministers but also great resilience. This is why we also place a strong emphasis on wellbeing – seeing this as a partnership where you take responsibility for your own wellbeing, while knowing that there is always support available from bishops and diocesan staff. Additional support is also offered by our partner organisations such as Launde Abbey (retreat centre), St Philip's Centre (interfaith centre), Community of the Tree of Life (residential and dispersed community for young adults) and of course the Cathedral.

I hope that I may have the opportunity of meeting you in the near future, but in the meantime be assured of my prayers.

Yours in Christ,



**The Rt Revd Martyn Snow**  
**Bishop of Leicester**

## Shaped By God Together – a brief introduction

*Our new [Shaped By God Together](#) Minster Communities framework will help our local worshipping communities to grow the Kingdom of God and live out our everyday faith.*

Shaped By God Together (SBGT) is the process through which the diocese is currently reshaping to ensure our ministry and mission is equipped and supported in the best way possible within our vision of the Kingdom of God, and our diocesan finances are used in order to resource our strategic priorities.

As part of this SBGT process, the Diocesan Synod voted strongly in favour of the Minster Communities framework in October 2021. Between 2022 and 2026, every parish, fresh expression of Church, clergyperson and lay minister, chaplain and school, will be expected to participate in conversation between local context and the diocesan leadership, in order to determine how they find their place within the framework as we form 20-25 Minster Communities across the diocese. Alongside the structural changes (which are likely to involve Joint Church Councils), we are encouraging all worshipping communities to develop how they enable discipleship and encourage vocations, grow in outwardly focused mission, engage with children, young people and schools, and work in partnership across differences. The development of a healthy culture of wellbeing is also vital.

More detailed information can be found on the Diocesan website in the [SBGT webpages](#).

Claire Bampton, Diocesan Programme Manager



## OUR PATRON

Our patron is the [Haberdashers' Company](#), one of the ancient livery companies in the City of London. This relationship goes back to 1623, when Dame Mary Weld gave money in her will for the purchase of several patronages that included Wigston Magna.

The Company is proud of its historic connections with our benefice. Today that relationship is based on collegiate and spiritual support, and our incumbents have the chance to visit Haberdashers' Hall twice a year. They meet with other incumbents from Haberdashers' churches for fellowship and hospitality. These are nurturing, fun and lively events, to which the new incumbent will be made very welcome.

The Company provides a modest grant to the benefice on an annual basis. In extraordinary times, such as the Covid-19 pandemic, additional grants may be awarded.





## WHO WE ARE

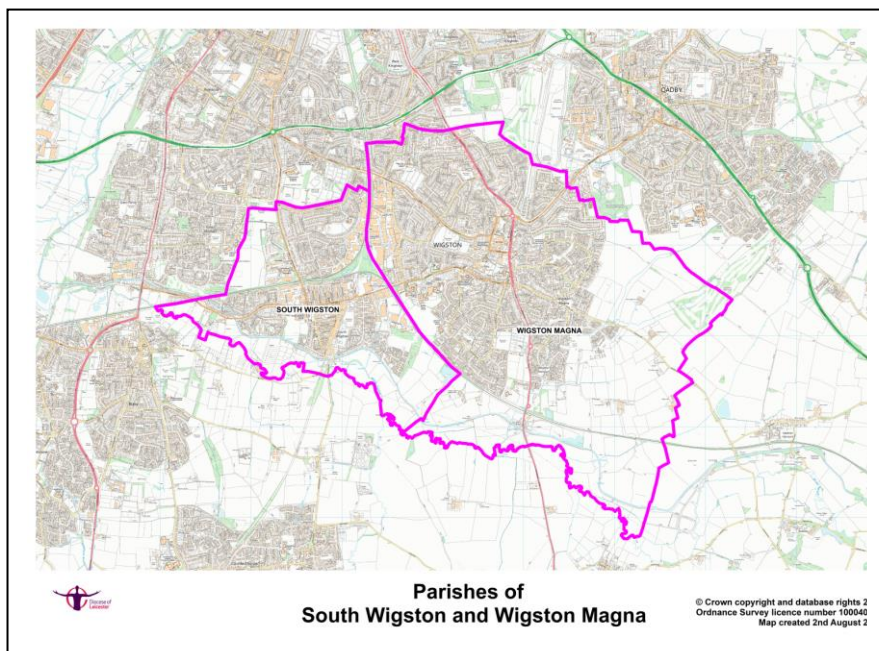
The Wigston Benefice was established in 2014 and comprises parishes of All Saints, Wigston Magna and St Thomas the Apostle, South Wigston, within the deanery of Gartree. We are part of the Diocese of Leicester and within this, the Archdeaconry of Leicester.

Our patron is The Worshipful Company of Haberdashers. Although we work as a Benefice each parish has retained its own PCC. We are a benefice with an established liberal catholic tradition reflected in our sacramental worship and inclusive welcome to all.

## WHERE WE ARE

The Benefice is located within the Borough of Oadby and Wigston, Leicestershire. It lies four miles south of the city of Leicester. The Benefice has a combined population of approx. 38,000.

There is easy access to both the M1 and M69 motorways and both Wigston Magna and South Wigston are on regular bus routes into Leicester city centre. South Wigston also has a small train station providing a direct rail link to Birmingham.



Schools in Wigston Magna are: All Saints Church of England Primary School, 4 other Primary schools and Wigston Academy, which is located on 3 separate sites and caters for 11- to 18-year-olds. There are number of churches in Wigston Magna including, Methodist, URC, Evangelical, Mormon, Life Church, Church for all Nations and the Hope Community Church. Wigston Magna is also home to numerous care Homes, a medical centre from which two busy practices are run and various dental surgeries. There is a modern gym and swimming pool housed in the Everyone Active Leisure Centre. The Record Office for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland is currently located in Wigston Magna. The majority of the housing is privately owned.

In South Wigston there are: 2 primary schools, a high school, a FE college, a health centre and a number of churches (Roman Catholic, Congregational, Methodist, Baptist, URC, Salvation Army and a Travellers' church). There is also one care home within the parish. Work is currently being undertaken on the construction of a new 1,700 place Category C prison which is due to open in 2023. The Territorial Army is based at the Army Reserve Centre in South Wigston.

## OUR VISION

Looking to the future we hope to build on our tradition of shared sacramental worship, fellowship and social activities whilst at the same time valuing and retaining the individuality of both parish churches. Through everyday prayer, witness and service we aim to be a welcoming, inclusive worshipping community, reaching out to those in the local area who, for whatever reason, have either never considered coming to church, those who have struggled to return to church after the pandemic and those who have lost their faith. We would like to see an increase in our congregation numbers, especially amongst the younger age groups. As a Benefice we are enthusiastic to engage with new ideas and fresh expressions enabling us to grow in numbers, faith and discipleship.

## REALISING OUR VISION

We aim to realise this vision by:

1. Developing our worship to be more welcoming and accessible to everyone
2. Continuing the ongoing commitment with local schools, in particular All Saints' Church of England Primary School, and developing and strengthening relationships with all other schools in the area
3. Being motivated and confident to support each other in engaging with the local community, putting the local church at the heart of the community
4. Developing a better understanding of the Shaped by God Together process and embracing the opportunities it brings to share our distinctive liberal catholic approach to spirituality and mission within whatever Minster Community grouping we eventually find ourselves part of.
5. Deepening our discipleship, post pandemic, by rebuilding small groups for prayer and study



## ROLE DESCRIPTION

To lead the Benefice Ministry team across both parishes helping it to flourish and to have day-to-day oversight for the parish of All Saints' Wigston Magna . In particular:

- 1) To build on our shared sacramental approach to worship promoting joint activities and promoting new forms of services
- 2) To enable a culture of lay involvement for all baptised members. Learning from the example of community self-organisation evident during the pandemic
- 3) To be visible within the community and to encourage the laity to be similarly engaged in the life of the community
- 4) To provide effective leadership through the coming change to Minster Communities, encouraging confidence in our own traditions and a willingness to share them with other parishes
- 5) To apply good organisational / IT skills in relation to the above

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

**We are praying for a new Rector who:**

- Will develop strategy and lead change, motivating, building confidence and harnessing the gifts of all
- Can manage the Benefice well and develop appropriate structures
- Has a passion for making new disciples, enabling the church to grow
- Will exercise a priestly ministry deepening the church's prayer and worshipping life, enabling personal growth and building a caring community
- Will assume a prominent role in the public square, relate to civic institutions and engage in contemporary and social issues

We also hope that our new Rector will be a clear thinker and communicator who will teach and apply the Bible.



## WHAT WE CAN OFFER

As a benefice we can offer the successful candidate:

- A commitment and desire to change
- A willingness to accept new challenges
- An openness to spiritual transformation as reflected in our Taizé and Fire Mass services
- Prayerful support
- Respect for, and encouragement to take days off and time out
- A warm welcome regardless of: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, sex or sexual orientation
- An established clergy team of an Associate Vicar and two curates
- A small, but dedicated, group of willing volunteers and supportive PCCs
- Highly competent organists at both churches with a group of keen amateur musicians at All Saints

## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

In the future we would like to see:

- Rebuilding of congregational involvement in all aspects of church life
- Encouraging and expanding our involvement with local schools and care homes
- Exploration of opportunities for mission in new areas of housing development
- Reintroduction of innovative services, for example café church, healing service and services for junior members of the congregation
- A joint choir, and or music group, that would be available to both churches
- An expanded Benefice Pastoral team
- An increase in the number of scheduled Benefice services
- Increased communication and sharing of skills and experience between the two parishes
- A more stable foundation for the churches' finances, by increasing all income routes
- The implementation of a joint social team to coordinate and publicise social events across the Benefice





## OUR WORSHIP AND SERVICES

Our worship follows a liberal catholic tradition, with openness to other forms of worship . We are committed to the involvement of lay people in our regular worship and to making our worship as accessible as possible to everyone.

Our current offering is:

	All Saints	St Thomas'			
Sunday	10:00 – Mass with organ and hymns. Incense is used and the Angelus is said A sound system is used if the organist is unavailable	10:00 – Eucharist with organ and hymns			
3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month		10:00 – Café Church with Eucharist			
5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month	10:00 – Benefice Eucharist – alternating between the two churches. With organ and hymns				
Monday		19:30 – Said Eucharist			
Wednesday		10:30 – Said Eucharist			
Thursday	10:00 – Said Mass				
Saturday	10:00 – Said Mass				
Monday - Friday	Daily offices are said via Zoom				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Additional Benefice services take place during the year, for example, Patronal Festivals, Christmas, All Souls, Holy Week</li><li>• Special services are held in both churches throughout the year, including Mothering Sunday, Easter, Harvest, Remembrance Sunday and Advent</li><li>• Stations of the Cross are held in both churches weekly during Lent</li><li>• There are daily services during Holy Week, including an Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday.</li><li>• The Clergy team and Pastoral Assistants take communion to the housebound on a rota basis</li></ul>					
Occasional offices		All Saints		St Thomas'	
		2021	2022	2021	2022
Baptisms	All Saints - normally 1 <sup>st</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday afternoons St Thomas' – 11:30 after the morning service	3	23	9	1
Weddings/ blessings		7	6	3	2
Funerals in church		9	13	8	7
Funerals at crematorium		9	10	3	1
Interments of ashes					
We are gradually migrating to 'Life Events Diary' for Occasional Offices recording					

## BENEFICE LIFE

### Faith and Discipleship across the Benefice

In recent years, the Benefice has been a **Training Benefice** for Deacons and Priests. Fr Chris is the Training Incumbent for our current curates; Fr Nick Baker and Fr Paul Betts. Fr Nick has now been 'signed off' and is looking for a first post of responsibility. Fr Paul will continue to be supervised by Fr Chris post-vacancy.

**Home communion** Our clergy team and Pastoral Assistants visit the housebound to administer communion when requested.

**Pilgrimages to Walsingham** These three-day Pilgrimages are traditionally held annually.

**St Albans** A one-day Pilgrimage to St Albans to celebrate the Saint's martyrdom is also held annually.

**Quiet days** Annual quiet days are organised at a venue away from the Benefice. With a guest leader, this is the opportunity to take some time out for quiet reflection and prayer.

**Study groups/house Groups** No regular house groups currently meet but regular Lent and Advent study groups take place. During October, pre pandemic, we held a series of Pilgrim Courses. In October this year a Journey in Faith course is being held in South Wigston.

Both parishes are members of **Churches Together**, joining with other churches in each parish for services and social events throughout the year. One of the highlights in Wigston Magna is the annual Good Friday Service with a procession that starts from outside the Sainsbury's supermarket in the centre of Wigston Magna. In South Wigston there is a Good Friday service outside the Tesco supermarket and the annual Act of Remembrance at the war memorial.



## Social events in the Benefice



**St Wistan's Walk** This takes place every year on 1 June (St Wistan's day) and is a Pilgrim walk which starts at Saint Wistan's church, Wistow and ends at St Wistan's church, Wigston Magna. It is organised by local churches and the Councils of Oadby & Wigston and Market Harborough.

**Coffee mornings** are held in our church halls throughout the year and are for fund raising and social interaction.

**Ride & Stride** This is an annual fund-raising event for the Leicestershire Historic Churches Trust. It is normally held on the second Saturday in September. Members of the congregation take part in the event, either cycling or walking around churches in Leicestershire. We also open our churches during the day for riders and striders to check in and have a chat.

**Musical events and concerts** All Saints' has close contacts with the local choir, "Harmonics" who use the church hall for rehearsals and also hold concerts in the church. Other concerts take place at the request of organisations. At St Thomas' the large, open plan nave can seat up to 300 people. With good acoustics it is a popular venue for concerts, including the local Civic Orchestra and Wigston Band. Large school services are held in the church, particularly at Christmas for school nativity services.

**Faith with Spice** This evening event is held at a local Indian restaurant in Wigston Magna, where we join together to enjoy a lovely curry meal and listen to an invited guest Speaker

**Pancake Party** A morning of pancake themed games and, pancake eating (of course!). Held on the nearest Saturday to Shrove Tuesday, this is a charity fund-raising event

**Bellringing** Both churches have rings of 8 bells and have active bands of bellringers. Along with fellow ringers from St Margaret's, Leicester, along with other local towers, they practice weekly and ring for Sunday services and other services throughout the year



## INDIVIDUAL PARISH LIFE

### ALL SAINTS:

**Open Church** All Saints is open to the public on Thursday and Saturday mornings from 10.30am to 12.00 for private reflection and conversation. Tea and coffee is available.

**Jubilee afternoon tea** This was a popular and successful event which was attended by present and past members of the congregation and many from the local community.

**Celebration of 100 years recasting of the Bells** This took place in June 2022. Afternoon tea accompanied photographic displays of the history of bell ringing in All Saints and a short demonstration was given by a team of hand bell ringers

**Parish lunches** take place in the church hall.

**Collection for food banks** These are organised both in church and on the street in Wigston Magna.

**Visits to Launde Abbey and Mount St Bernard Monastery** Retreats for spiritual growth and reflection have taken place to Launde Abbey and Mount St Bernard Monastery.

**Baptism preparation and Confirmation classes** Baptism preparation classes take place at All Saints on the first Saturday of every month. Confirmation classes are organised as required. A group is currently meeting and being prepared for Confirmation which will take place in All Saints church in October 2022.



### ST THOMAS':

**Messy Church and Café Church** – on third Sunday of the month our morning service takes the form of a Café Church, a more informal, interactive, and social Eucharist service. Messy Church, aimed specifically at children and their families, takes place to celebrate church festivals and special days. Our aim for both Café Church and Messy Church is to reach out to those in the community who feel that the structure and formality of a traditional Sunday Church of England Service is not for them.

A particular highlight of our year is the annual **Christingle service** held on Christmas Eve. This is usually an extremely well attended service which can attract a 300 plus congregation. For the vast majority of those attending, this would be the only service they came to in the year. During the service new toys are donated to the local charity 'Toys on the Table' which are then distributed to children in the local area.

As part of our community involvement, our Christmas Fair is held in the church and is part of the larger South Wigston **Christmas Capers**, an event organised by the local traders to coincide with the Christmas light switch on. This is an ideal opportunity for us to encourage local residents to step through the doors of the church.





## INDIVIDUAL PARISH DETAILS

### ALL SAINTS, WIGSTON MAGNA

Town population: 29,000

Electoral Roll: 63

Average weekly attendance 35

PCC comprises 14 persons (including clergy) which meets 4 times per year. A standing committee also meets 4 times per year, prior to PCC meetings in order to set the agenda. It may agree to expenditure of up to £500. Minor PCC decisions can be made by email responses

### CHURCH FABRIC



**All Saints** is a Grade 1 Listed building which is in a general good state of repair, however the last quinquennial report states that there is significant medium-term concern about the general condition of the masonry, including the tower. A sound system has been installed and it has recently been upgraded. A loop system is also in place. The church stands in a well-tended garden and it has wheelchair access.

**The Church Hall** is located 50 yards from the church and is in good condition. It has a small patio garden. The Church Hall has wheelchair access. An extension to the Church Hall was built circa 2015 to include a modern kitchen and storeroom. It is available for hire to the local community and is used for church social events

A new boiler was installed in All Saints Church in 2019 and a new central heating system in the Church Hall was installed at the same time.



**Saint Wistan's** is a Grade 2 Listed building. The church is in a dangerously poor condition and is closed to the public. The process of formally closing it as a public place of worship and vesting it in the Diocesan Board of Finance, is currently ongoing with the Church Commissioners, following a period of consultation which resulted in several comments but no objections.

## **ST THOMAS THE APOSTLE, SOUTH WIGSTON**

Population: South Wigston is estimated at 8029 (2020 population estimates) in addition to this there will be the number of people living in the part of Glen Parva covered by the parish. Figures unknown but would estimate a further 1,500

Electoral Roll: 69

Average weekly attendance: 34

Our PCC currently has 13 members with 3 vacancies who meet 4 times a year with additional meetings as and when required.

The Standing and Finance Committee also meet 4 times a year, to agree the agenda for the PCC.

### **History of the Parish**

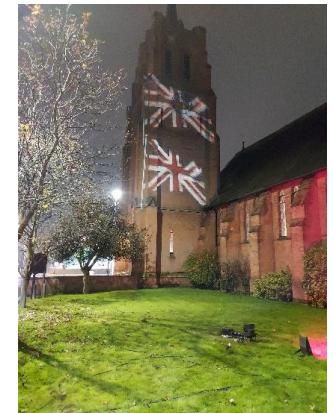
The Parish of Glen Parva with South Wigston was created in 1893 from parts of the parishes of Wigston Magna and Aylestone. Most of Glen Parva was transferred to the parish of Blaby in 1962 with only a small area being retained with South Wigston. To reflect this the parish was renamed St Thomas the Apostle, South Wigston.

### **South Wigston**

South Wigston is an urban village which grew with the coming of the railway in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The church is very prominent as it sits at the busy junction of the main road through the village and the main road from Leicester city centre.

Development in South Wigston has taken place over a period of time. Much of the 'old part' of South Wigston, where the church is located, consists of streets of terraced housing built in the 1880s with a main shopping street that hosts a parade of shops. There are currently two large supermarkets on the edge of the village. Later developments include an area of housing built in the 1930's which later was extended to house people who had lost homes during the war and then the building of a newer housing estate in the 1960s. The most recent housing development is on the fringes of the parish.

The Index of Deprivation shows that parts of South Wigston are in the bottom 20% for income, education, and health. In addition, South Wigston is ranked almost in the bottom third of deprived Parishes in the Church Urban Fund's statistics.



## CHURCH FABRIC

The church is listed as Grade II\* and was designed by Stockdale Harrison. The main body of the church was built in 1892 and consecrated on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1893, the tower was added in 1901 and houses a ring of 8 bells. By adding the tower, the south porch was created which is now the main entrance. A clock was added to the tower in 1920 as a memorial to those from the parish who fell in the Great War. The church was formerly the garrison church for the Royal Leicestershire Regiment which had its barracks in Glen Parva

There is no graveyard, but there is a small well-maintained garden fronting the main road. A section of the church grounds was made over to the local authority to erect a war memorial to those from the parish who lost their lives during both world wars. There is a small car park (recently re-laid) by the side of church.

The last quinquennial took place in October 2021. No major issues were highlighted within the main body of the church; however, the inspection did highlight significant structural movement at the top of the tower staircase, this was classified as an urgent repair. After a very successful fundraising campaign, work commenced in January 2023 and will be completed by the end of March, securing the future of the church for generations to come.



Currently there are no toilet or kitchen facilities within the church building, this is something we would very much like to rectify at some point in the future.

The adjacent church hall was built in the 1920s. It is a substantial 2 storey building with toilets, kitchen, 2 large halls (one on each floor), a small meeting room and the Benefice office. The hall is available for community hire. Unfortunately, the condition of the hall is a cause of concern and will require substantial investment in the future. This is something the PCC are aware of and looking into with the Associate Vicar.

## MEET THE TEAM



### **Associate Vicar: The Revd Christopher Johnson**

Fr Chris has been Associate Vicar of the Wigston Benefice since May 2016. Born and brought up in Telford, he studied Theology & Music at Canterbury Christ Church University. After training at Cuddesdon, Chris married Laura and moved to Herefordshire in 2013 to serve his curacy in the Weobley and Staunton Group of Parishes. In addition to the usual aspects of parish ministry, Chris is training incumbent to Fr Nick & Fr Paul, padre to the local Air Cadet squadron, governor at a local primary school, Assistant Area Dean, and Vice-Chair of the DAC. He's also been known to keep wicket for the diocesan cricket team and to perform as a percussionist with the local orchestra.



### **Curate: The Revd Dr Nick Baker**

Nick has been Assistant Curate of the Wigston Benefice since July 2020. Born and raised in Sussex, he studied history at the University of Kent at Canterbury, which was followed by postgraduate studies at Surrey and York. After a brief spell in the second-hand book trade, he then pursued a career in special collections librarianship at Eton College, Hereford Cathedral and Princethorpe College. He trained for ordained ministry at St Hild College, alongside a placement at Burbage and Aston Flamville. He continues to publish and lecture on medieval art and is on the committee of The Browning Society.



### **Curate: The Revd Paul Betts**

Fr Paul initially joined the Wigston Benefice for the final year of contextual training before being ordained deacon at Leicester Cathedral in October 2021, then priested at Saint Margaret's Church, Leicester, in July 2022. Born and raised in Leicestershire, Fr Paul studied interior architecture at De Montfort University before developing a career in graphic design, in which he enjoyed working with many national and international artists and clients. Sensing a call to ordination through leading Taizé prayer, and following a time of further discernment and subsequent recommendation, Fr Paul trained contextually for ordination whilst studying Theology, Ministry, and Mission at St Hild College, Mirfield and Sheffield. Paul is a member of the LTA, and loves, amongst other things, cinema, mise en scène, the performing and visual arts, and all things tennis. Fr Paul writes on being priested: 'Some time ago I wrote that I believe God is calling me to give my life for service as a priest, to live that out with and for God, with and for others. This meant telling the story of God creatively and richly to a world in need of hope. I now know that sacrificial and sacramental call to be realised at the altar, as well as within myself and community. And all this underscored by a prayerful trust in the God who calls.'



## Church Wardens:

- **Patrick Thacker** has been Church Warden at All Saints for the last 26 years and is a Deanery Rep. He is wedding and baptism administrator at All Saints.
- **Winsum Wright** is also Church Warden and Deanery Rep. She is Electoral Roll Officer and thurifer at services.
- **Pauline Footman** and **Kate Martin** are the Church Wardens at St Thomas'

## Pastoral Assistant:

- **Jenny Barradell** is the Pastoral Assistant at St Thomas'. Jenny is also the Safeguarding Lead for Vulnerable Adults

## Safeguarding Officers:

- **Caroline Wordsworth** is the Safeguarding Officer at All Saints
- **June Day** is the Safeguarding Officer at St Thomas'. June also is the Safeguarding Lead for Children and Young People

## Organists:

**Che Gayton** is employed by the PCC as organist at All Saints.



**Ian Orr** is the Organist Emeritus at St Thomas'



## WHERE YOU WILL LIVE

**8 Harrogate Way, Wigston Magna, Leicester, LE18 3YB**

### DESCRIPTION:

The detached four-bedroom property is situated on the popular Meadows estate in Wigston Magna. It was erected circa 1985 and subsequently extended before being purchased by the Diocese in 2002.

Accommodation comprises: To the ground floor - entrance hall, study, living room, dining room, kitchen/utility room, cloakroom & conservatory. On the first floor are four bedrooms with an en suite shower room to the master room and a family bathroom. A detached double garage sits in front of and at a right angle to the house.

The front garden is made up of hard landscaping with room for several cars, the rear garden is laid predominantly to lawn. The grounds are enclosed by close-board fencing to the rear, northern & each side boundary and dwarf brick wall to the front, southern, roadside boundary.

Windows and doors throughout are double-glazed in PVCu-framed casements and there is gas central heating throughout.

