

Shellrock

High Oak

20 22



Hingham

Scoulton & Woodrising



## Welcome

*As we continue our pilgrimage together, we are praying for a Priest-In-Charge  
(Rector Designate) who LOVES the Lord Jesus.*

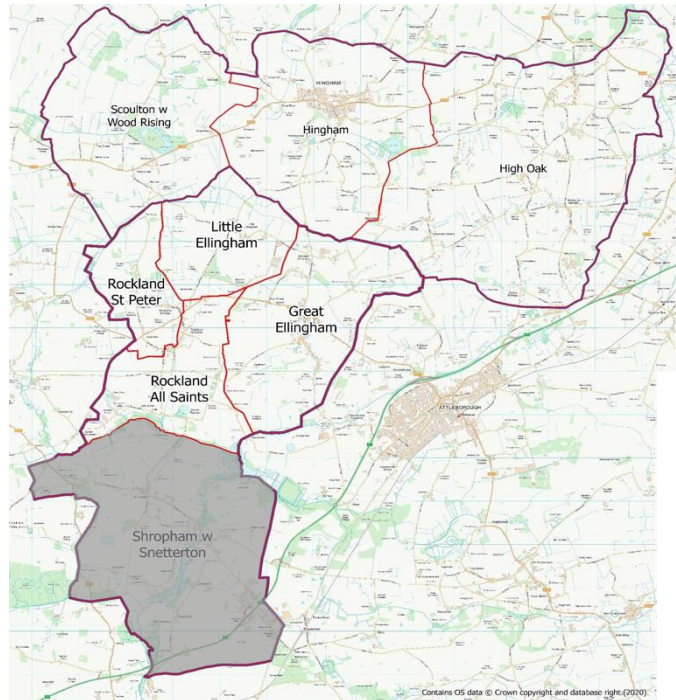
*Who will both lead us and walk with us as we seek to preach and teach the  
gospel faithfully and lovingly in this beautiful part of rural Norfolk.*

1 General description of our benefices.....	3
High Oak, Hingham, Scoulton with Woodrising .....	3
Shellrock Benefice .....	4
2 Summary of our needs and opportunities.....	5
Benefice of High Oak and Hingham with Scoulton and Woodrising.....	5
Shellrock Benefice .....	5
3 Who could help us?.....	7
4 Who will help you? .....	9
5 What's going on at each church?.....	10
Benefice of High Oak and Hingham.....	10
St Andrew's Church, Hingham .....	10
Scoulton with Woodrising: Holy Trinity and St Nicholas Churches.....	12
High Oak Group .....	13
(1) Hackford St Mary.....	13
(2) St Andrew's and All Saints Church, Wicklewood.....	13
(3) Morley St Botolph Church .....	14
(4) St. Andrew's Church, Deopham,.....	14
(5) St Peter's Chapel-of-Ease, Morley St. Peter .....	14
Shellrock Benefice .....	16
St James' Church, Great Ellingham .....	16
St Peter's Church, Little Ellingham.....	16
All Saints' Church, Rocklands.....	17
St Peter's Church, Rockland .....	17
St Peter and St Paul, Shropham.....	18
6 Ecumenical relationships .....	19
7 Schools in our Benefice.....	19
8 Where you will live.....	20
9 Safeguarding and well being .....	20
10 How to apply, closing date etc. ....	21

## 1 General description of our benefices

Our benefices are located in South Norfolk. The population of the new proposed joint benefice is over 8,000 and is an area of rapid growth due to multiple new housing developments along the nearby A11 corridor.

Although the vibrant city of Norwich is only 20 mins drive away, we are a rural area serving farming communities, small industries, and commuters working in Norwich, Cambridge, and farther afield. The large Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital and the University of East Anglia are also close by and are major employers in the area. The adjacent market towns of Wymondham and Attleborough are served by regular rail services to Norwich, Cambridge, and onward to London.



*Combined Benefices*

Our two benefices (the Benefice of High Oak and Hingham with Scoulton and Woodrising, and the Shellrock Benefice) began to work closely together in March 2022 in preparation for a proposed merger. We now have joint Ministry Team meetings, a single service rota, and a streamlined communication system.

*[Note: The Shropham PCC have applied to the Diocese to move into the East Harling Benefice and, depending on the timing of this move, will not be part of the combined new Benefice.]*

**High Oak, Hingham, Scoulton with Woodrising**

The benefice of High Oak, Hingham and Scoulton with Woodrising was formed in 1992, originally as a team benefice, but latterly staffed by a rector, ably assisted by a local ministry team consisting of Ordained Local Ministers, Licensed Lay Ministers and retired clergy.

In the centre of the benefice is Hingham, a small Georgian town with a population of about 2,500. Scoulton with Woodrising is a deeply rural area where the two parish churches serve a total population of fewer than 300.

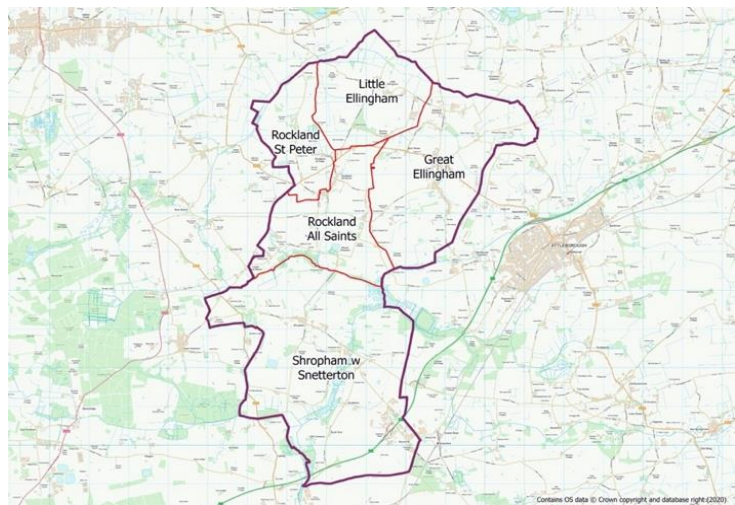


*Parishes of the Benefice of High Oak and*

The High Oak parish consists of the former parishes of Morley (St Botolph's Parish Church and St Peter's Chapel-of-ease), Wicklewood, Deopham and Hackford. Parts of the parish are deeply rural, with new building in other areas. Total population is about 2,600.

### **Shellrock Benefice**

The benefice of Shellrock comprises the five individual parishes of Great Ellingham (pop c. 1150), Little Ellingham (pop c. 250), Rockland All Saints, Rockland St Peter (pop together c. 720) and Shropham with Snetterton (pop c.550). Great Ellingham is a centre of new building with the population expected to double within the next few years.



*Parishes of the Shellrock Benefice*

For the past 10 years, the care of the parishes has been overseen by a priest appointed for House for Duty. Now the benefice is staffed by a retired ordained minister receiving a small stipend, ably assisted by two Licensed Lay ministers.

## **2 Summary of our needs and opportunities**

This position is, on paper, daunting. There are lots of churches! But there is a well-running structure maintaining services, the sacraments, and pastoral care by committed teams with a vision for growth through evangelism and closer community links.

### **Benefice of High Oak and Hingham with Scoulton and Woodrising**

In Hingham, our vision is

- *Seeking to grow the congregation and work with children and young people*
- *Stabilising the finances of the parish to be financially secure and independent*
- *Realising the Facilities Project to encourage the community use of the church*

We need to grow and re-establish St Andrew's Church as a community hub. The town is growing, and with lots of young families, we need to begin to engage with the local community. We are currently fundraising for Phase 2 of the Facilities Project (to instal toilets and upgrade the kitchen). The need for toilets inside the church was first identified in 1984, nearly 40 years ago, and it is finally within reach of becoming a reality. Once we have modern facilities, we see the opportunity to welcome more people into the church for community activities, through new and re-invigorated groups. This will go hand in hand with welcoming people to a new programme of Christian outreach activities.

The rural parishes of High Oak, Scoulton and Woodrising need someone committed to maintaining the pattern of worship and pastoral care in smaller communities with love and understanding.

### **Shellrock Benefice**

Most of our churches are in a rural setting where the priority is to maintain regular worship, to be seen to be present in our communities, and to share our faith wherever opportunity provides.

Each church in the Benefice is supported by members of other parishes in whatever way is needed. There is a Benefice Fellowship Group which meets on Tuesday mornings during term times, and studies a variety of Christian related topics.

However, Gt Ellingham is subject to a large new housing development, still in progress, which is set to double the population within the next five years. This offers an opportunity for the whole Benefice to reach out to new householders; to help establish community and

to engage in appropriate outreach activities which will serve the Christian Gospel. We are fortunate in that there is a Federation of two primary schools situated within the Benefice.

We are committed to be open to God's guidance even if this should require change in our accustomed ways and attitudes. We are also committed to prepare for future generations and to ensure that there will be continuing spiritual leadership in years to come.

### **3 Who could help us?**

First and foremost we are looking for someone of deep Christian faith who loves the Lord Jesus. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century many people in Norfolk, just as elsewhere, are sceptical of the truth of Christianity. As our new incumbent it will be essential that you are a prayerful person who is an inspiring teacher and preacher of the gospel, someone who knows the Lord and lives for Him.

Although we have many different styles of worship, what holds us together is our faith in Christ. We need someone who can appreciate the broad churchmanship that is displayed across the proposed new, enlarged Benefice. In this context you will need to be a collaborative leader and work with those who will share with you in ministry. Being skilled, caring, and able to delegate responsibility to others, including lay people who may be called to share in ministry (in its broadest sense) is required.

We are looking for someone who can work with our rich and diverse ministry team, is creative and able to reach out to people. Children and young people of the combined benefices particularly need outreach, as well as those not attending church. We have a number of activities taking place in different churches and we feel there is an opportunity to expand and share the learning to the best effect.

We hope you will be delighted to live in this special part of rural Norfolk. Some of us are incomers, but others of us have been here all our lives. Someone who is sociable and gets involved in our local communities, including schools, community groups and charities, will be very welcome.

We will need someone who feels comfortable teaching about Christian giving. At the moment we are not paying our way in terms of parish share. We are looking for leadership in this area, so that we could close the gap significantly within a fairly short time.

In a similar vein, if you might have an eye for detail, for church procedures and protocols, that would be very welcome – just to make sure that in our thirteen different worship centres we are doing all the right things!

We have a very broad mixture of musicians with backgrounds of different styles of church music. Shellrock Benefice has an established Benefice Choir, and a Music Group consisting of guitar, flute, tambourine and singers. We need someone to maintain our music and support the musicians of the Benefice. There is an opportunity to develop our ministry of music. Finally a sense of humour, especially when it comes to the downsides of doing our bit for bat conservation, wouldn't go amiss!

Our greatest wish is for a priest to lead us and work with us in worship, pastoral ministry, and developing a strategy for growth.





## 4 Who will help you?

### *Our Ministry Team*



The Very Reverend Dr John Edmondson  
*Retired clergy*



Dr Dale Southall  
*Licensed Lay Minister*



The Reverend Prebendary Sue Strutt  
*Priest Associate*



Carol Bennett  
*Licensed Lay Minister*



The Reverend Peter Trett  
*Retired Ordained Local Minister*



Colin Thomas  
*Licensed Lay Minister*



The Reverend Shirley Holt  
*Retired Ordained Local Minister*



The Reverend Canon Michael Stevenson  
*Retired clergy*



The Reverend Gill Wells  
*Retired clergy*

### *Our Administrative Assistance*

Caroline Money, Colin Thomas, Margaret Moore-Vale, Jane Robson



## 5 What's going on at each church?

### Benefice of High Oak and Hingham



#### *St Andrew's Church, Hingham*

[www.standrewshingham.org.uk](http://www.standrewshingham.org.uk)

St Andrew's is located at the centre of the pretty market town of Hingham, with a population of 2,500 centred around the Georgian houses in the Market Place. The town has its own primary school, doctor's surgery, several local shops and businesses including butchers and bakers, a pub,

village hall, and sports facilities.

St Andrew's Church is a very active Christian community with lots of things going on. We have three regular weekly services; midweek communion (CW) and two services on Sunday, 8am Communion (BCP) and 10am Parish Service alternating between Communion (CW) and Morning Prayer. Worshiping in a broad range of music and liturgical styles is part of our culture. Reaching out to the local community and spreading God's word is the heart of what we try to do. We host Community Support initiatives, including St Andrew's Pantry, a Wall of Kindness, a book exchange, and even the *Paws for Coffee* monthly dog café! We are also launching an SOS email service for Pastoral support.



We are also committed to our building being used for community activities. In addition to church run groups, the building has recently hosted or currently hosts community keep fit, a Dementia Cafe, Music Therapy Groups, local craft fairs, and other festive events. To expand community use, we have been developing our facilities and have raised over £130,000 towards new toilet and kitchen facilities. The excellent acoustics has allowed the church to host several concerts with visiting choirs across the county.



At Christmas, St Andrew's is the focal point for the town's worship, hosting an ecumenical carol service where all of the local churches come together, and the Light of the World Service on Christmas Eve which fills the church to capacity (450).

Our church is Grade I listed and is an unusually large 14th century church. There is a network of volunteers who support the work of the church. A secular charity, St Andrew's Hingham Heritage Fund, contributes to the upkeep of the church fabric. Finally, we welcome many American visitors due to our links with local US activity in WWII and also to Abraham Lincoln, whose ancestor Samuel Lincoln emigrated from Hingham and founded Hingham, Massachusetts.



### *Sculpton with Woodrising: Holy Trinity and St Nicholas Churches*

In our modern day, when adherence to the Christian faith is increasingly the exception rather than the rule, we see the maintenance of centres of Christian witness in the Norfolk countryside to be essential, perhaps as never before.



As possibly the smallest element in our new combined benefice, we would be grateful if our new incumbent could simply become a known figure in our villages and lead our worship occasionally. In return we will continue to do everything we can to maintain our Christian witness here.

With a total population of perhaps 300 and an average congregation of only five, it is a struggle for us to keep our two beautiful medieval churches open for worship. Yet our vision is to do just that! We have several notable features. For examples, St Nicholas Church in Woodrising is home to one of only 3 working Barrel organs in the UK!



## High Oak Group

We are four village churches with one chapel of ease. We were brought together as a Benefice forty years ago and named the High Oak Parish. We are highly supportive of one another's communities and our regular congregation of about two dozen rotates around each of the other churches to maintain a regular pattern of weekly services. We believe it to be absolutely essential that our centres for Christian worship should continue to be at the heart of our communities.



For more information on our churches, see [www.higoakandhingham.org](http://www.higoakandhingham.org).

### *(1) Hackford St Mary*

This is the smallest of the five churches in the High Oak Benefice.

St Mary's has been very fortunate that parishioners have donated generously of their time and money. This has enabled completion of many repairs which have enhanced and improved the building. When the chancel arch was repaired medieval paintings were found. Refurbishment of the Church Clock mechanism and a new West Door have recently been completed.

### *(2) St Andrew's and All Saints Church, Wicklewood*

Unfortunately, we have been closed for worship for two years whilst structural issues have been assessed. However, St. Andrew's and All Saints remains a central focus for community life, enjoying excellent relationships with the local Primary school and community groups. Wicklewood is the largest village in the Benefice with a population of around 755 residents.

We are currently finalising a phased programme for remedial repairs, which we hope should see a re-opening for regular worship in 2023.



### *(3) Morley St Botolph Church*



This is the parish Church for Morley St Peter and Morley St Botolph. The church was built at the end of the 14th century. As a result of a major fire in 1959, it was repaired and re-opened in 1964. It has a Lynchgate which was rebuilt in the Victorian period and was renovated in 2016. Recently, a major restoration project initiated in 2017, was completed the following year and saw the roof tiles replaced and stonework and drainage repaired.

### *(4) St. Andrew's Church, Deopham,*

This is the largest church in the Parish of High Oak and is used for most major yearly services, such as Christmas and Easter. We have hosted concerts and the local primary school's termly services. We are grateful for voluntary help in cleaning the church and maintaining the grounds which contain a wildlife conservation section. A usual comment in the Visitors' Book is that the church is a peaceful, lovely place.

St. Andrew's has problems associated with having been built in the 14th century, but is an imposing and beautiful building with a very tall battlemented tower. A team called the Star group is actively in the Development Phase of applying for NLHF funding in order to make the church not just a place for religious observance, but also to provide a useful and well-maintained community space.



### *(5) St Peter's Chapel-of-Ease, Morley St. Peter*



This Church is a Chapel-of-Ease to Morley St Botolph and is set in a peaceful rural setting. We enjoy local support and attendance at our services. We have a vision towards installing modern facilities which we see as key to sustaining regular worship and increasing the community use of the church. Wymondham College, a school for boarders and day pupils is nearby, as is a

modern Village Hall offering extensive sporting and social facilities.

## ***Benefice Wide***

A Church homegroup meets in Hingham, but draws from across the Benefice. The group meets weekly for study and fellowship.



## **Shellrock Benefice**

[www.shellrockbenefice.org.uk](http://www.shellrockbenefice.org.uk)

### ***St James' Church, Great Ellingham***

This is the largest church in our benefice. It is a 14<sup>th</sup> century, Grade 1 listed building set in the middle of the village; the tower is a local landmark in the surrounding countryside, especially when lit at Christmas. Its relatively unadorned interior belies a wealth of interest inside. The PCC is planning to expand its activities as a gesture of welcome to those joining our village, from the new housing expansion. The church plays a key role in local community activities e.g. the annual Teddy Bear Festival.



Regular worship includes an all age café church each month, led by the music group. It is a great opportunity for sharing fellowship. The congregation loves any excuse to share food, extend a welcome, and friendship. The Eucharist is regularly celebrated monthly. The PCC are in the process of rearranging services to take account of the increasing population of the village.

In addition to the Teddy Bear Festival, the Village Singers hold a concert in the church twice a year, always well attended. The school uses the church for acts of worship – harvest, nativity, carol service – as do the Scouts, including their presence at the annual Remembrance Sunday service. The church is a food collection point for the Thetford Food bank, along with other churches in the Benefice.

### ***St Peter's Church, Little Ellingham***



This attractive 13<sup>th</sup> century church is located in the middle of the village, with a population of 250 people. It was extensively restored in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, after a fire. The PCC is assisted in maintenance of the church by the Friends of St Peter. Due to their diligent fundraising a new kitchen has recently been installed in the church, which is used with Fellowship after services and for meetings.

The kitchen also gives us the facility to hold meetings in the church.

There are two services a month – a morning Eucharist, and an evening Prayer and Praise. This year there has been a Flower Festival in honour of the Queen's Jubilee, a MacMillan coffee morning, and a lunch is planned as a joint fundraiser with the Village Hall.

### ***All Saints' Church, Rocklands***



Our church stands in a pleasant rural setting, outside the confines of Rockland village, at the top of Church Hill. The church is very involved with local community groups including the Community shop, Little Rocky's Toddler group, Rocklanders Youth group, New Beginnings (previously WI), Men's Den. Members of All Saints PCC are very involved with the school, including the Head Teacher. Reciprocally, the community support the church, such as helping remove a fallen tree from the summer storms.

While only hosting one service per month at the moment, special services include Christingle, Candlemas, and a summer Pet Service, as well as marking all important feast days of the Church of England. There is no mains electricity or water and the organ is manually pumped, which all adds to its charm. The church is very involved in local community groups. There are regular fundraising and social events some of which are shared with Rockland St Peter's, such as the Advent Lunch.

### ***St Peter's Church, Rockland***

Our church is of great historical interest as it has one of Norfolk's round towers and has a thatched roof. We have many visitors over the year and in 2018 received recognition for being a 'Welcoming Church'. A new heating system was installed which enables us to use the church for events such as the Shellrock Talks to which everyone is welcome, and the facility to hold meetings.



We have an annual Pudsey lunch to raise money for Children in Need which also involves the village Parent and Toddler Group.

We have a small team of dedicated people who take pride in presenting the church at its best by keeping it clean and tidy and maintaining floral displays. Our main service each

month is a 'light touch' Family Service. Rocklands School celebrates specific services in our church. We truly welcome this level of involvement.

We engage in many fundraising activities to be able to honour our financial commitments. A Thanksgiving Service was held on 5<sup>th</sup> June to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. We had a visit from our Conty Councillor to plant an oak tree to mark the occasion.

### ***St Peter and St Paul, Shropham***

This is a 13<sup>th</sup> century, Grade 1 Listed church. A Holy Communion service takes place on the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the four months of the year when this occurs. Annual services include Mothering Sunday, Easter Day, Harvest Festival and Christmas Day.

*[Note: The Shropham PCC have applied to the Diocese to move into the East Harling Benefice and, depending on the timing of this move, will not be part of the combined new Benefice.]*

## **6 Ecumenical relationships**

As is often the case in the countryside, our churches offer a warm welcome to Christians from all denominational backgrounds.

Hingham has a long history of strong ecumenical partnerships with the Baptist, Methodist and Pentecostal Churches in Hingham. As 'Hingham Churches Together' we regularly hold joint events. This has included the Christmas Carol Singing in the Market Place and more recently the Ukraine Vigil and Lent course.

## **7 Schools in our Benefice**

There are four community primary schools in our new Benefice, who feed into Attleborough Academy (Secondary School) or Wymondham High Academy (Secondary School). There is one primary academy school; Morley Church of England Primary Academy, who recently joined St Benets Multi Academy Trust.

Great Ellingham and Rocklands Primary schools are Federated, sharing one headteacher and governing body.

There is also a free school; Wymondham Prep School (Sapienta Trust) which opened in September 2020.

Several of these schools have an excellent relationship with our Ministry Team and visit their local churches on a regular basis which is actively encouraged. We very much hope that our new priest will take an interest in continuing this important aspect of Christian ministry.

### Great Ellingham Primary School

This school was rated Good by Ofsted in 2016. There are currently 181 pupils registered at the school, with a published admission number of 25 pupils for Reception.

### Hingham Primary School

This school was rated Requires Improvement by Ofsted in 2019 and has capacity for 210 pupils, however there are currently 151 pupils registered at the school. The school has a published admission number of 30 pupils for Reception.

### Morley Church of England Primary Academy

This school was rated Good by Ofsted in 2018 and has capacity for 140 pupils, however there are currently 142 pupils registered at the school. The school has a published admission number of 20 pupils.

### Rocklands Primary School

This school has been rated Good by Ofsted in 2018. This is a small rural school, with 78 pupils registered at the school and a published admission number of 10 pupils for Reception.

#### Wicklewood Primary and Nursery School

This school was rated Outstanding by Ofsted in 2015 and has capacity for 210 pupils, however has 217 pupils registered at the school. The school has a published admission number of 30 pupils.

#### Wymondham College (Sapienta Trust)

This school is the largest co-educational state boarding and day school in the UK. Rated Outstanding by Ofsted in 2012, it was recently awarded Secondary School of the Year, TES.

#### Wymondham College Prep School

This new free school opened in September 2020 and has a published admission number of 60 pupils. There are currently 150 pupils registered at the school.

*[The schools below are outside the benefice but many of the primary schools feed into them.]*

#### Wymondham High School (Enrich Learning Trust)

This school was rated Good by Ofsted in 2017.

#### Attleborough High School (Sapienta Trust)

This school was rated Good by Ofsted in 2021.

## **8 Where you will live**

A new Vicarage has been identified within Hingham. This is a modern, eco friendly property located close to the church. The Diocese is in the process of purchasing this property, subject to contract. Details will be forwarded.

## **9 Safeguarding and well being**

We take safeguarding very seriously in our benefices. We adhere to the House of Bishops' recommendations in all aspects of safeguarding policy and have safeguarding officers in place in both benefices.

Similarly we will take our new incumbent's wellbeing very seriously. We will encourage to take your full quota of annual leave in addition to a full day off every week. All agreed working expenses will be reimbursed in full.

## **10 How to apply, closing date etc.**

None of the PCCs in either Benefice have passed a resolution under the House of Bishops' Declaration on the Ministry of Bishops and Priests.

(details to follow)