



Our life together serving Christ, Church and Communities



Thank you for your interest in a role serving in the Diocese of Norwich. I hope that this document shares something of our life together and gives you a favour of ministry here.

This description can only share a fraction of our Gospel work and I would encourage you to come and meet us to; see the vibrancy of our church communities, the creativity of the city of Norwich, the stunningly beautiful coastline, Broads and countryside with their market towns and villages.

Whether your passion for ministry lies in rural, inner-city, seaside towns, commuter villages, suburban or market towns , we have a range of places where we are seeking clergy who are passionate about the Gospel, prayerful in their devotions, pastoral in their care for people, and prepared to join in a prophetic song.

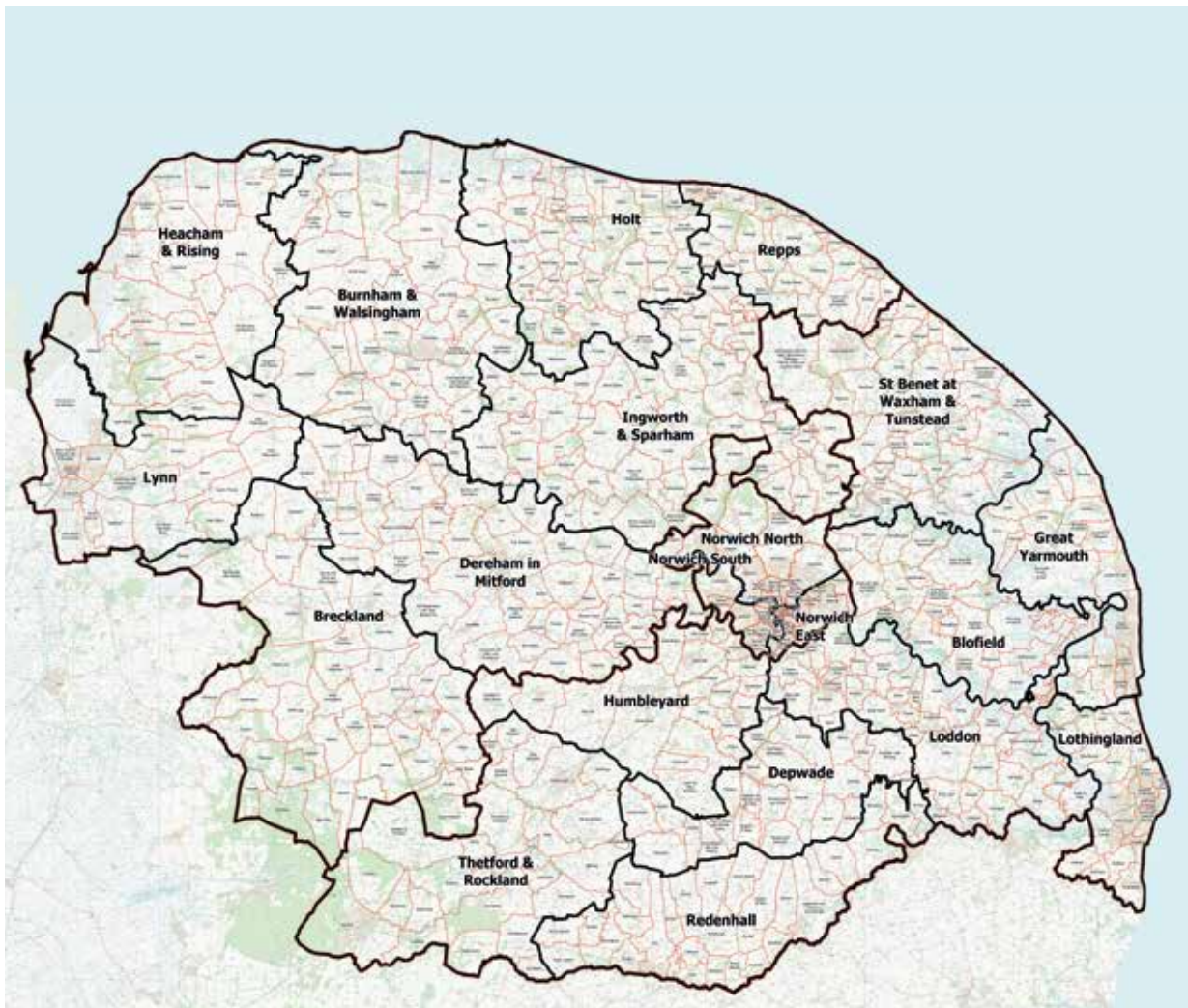
If there are any questions about our life together and how that is experienced in the ethos, culture, and character of the Diocese, then my colleagues and I are more than happy to have a conversation with you. We see the appointment process for a role as being one of shared discernment and this comes with my prayers as you listen for God's call and ponder whether that is to serve in the Diocese of Norwich. Do consider joining us – together we are transformed by Christ, prayerfully, pastorally, and prophetically.

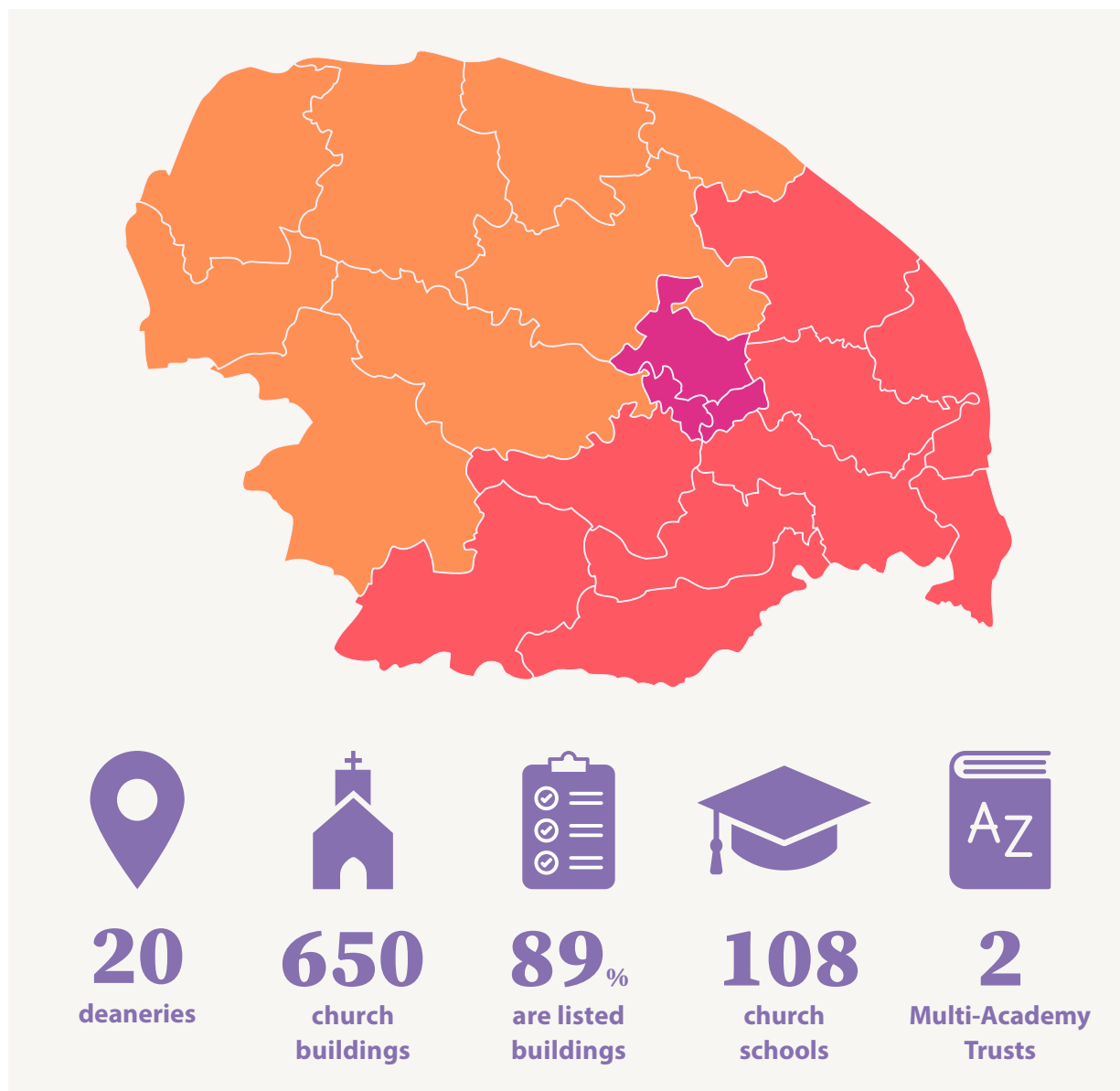
The Rt Revd Graham Usher
Bishop of Norwich
October 2023

The Diocese of Norwich is one of the oldest in the country, it is also one of the largest in geographical size in England but with a relatively low population density. It covers an area of 1,804 square miles and had in 2021 it had a population of just over 928,000.

The Diocese covers almost all of Norfolk, except for most of two deaneries of Ely Diocese, and includes also a small part of Suffolk around Lowestoft. Apart from Norwich, there are five significant towns; King's Lynn and Dereham in the Lynn archdeaconry, and Great Yarmouth, Lowestoft, and Thetford in the Norfolk archdeaconry.

The rural areas contain a scattered population living in communities ranging from market towns (of which Norfolk has many, most of them growing) to villages of various sizes and many very small remote hamlets. In terms of geographical area, most of the Diocese would be termed rural, whilst over half the total population lives in urban areas.





The Diocese is divided into three archdeaconries and 20 deaneries. It is served by around 240 licensed clergy, more than two thirds are stipendiary, and, at the time of writing, almost 300 are active retired clergy. There are presently about 100 Licensed Lay Ministers (LLM) and over 130 Authorised Worship Assistants (AWA).

We have 550 parishes with more than 650 church buildings. The vast majority (89 per

cent) are listed buildings. After the Diocese of Oxford, the Diocese of Norwich has more churches in use than any other in England despite having the third lowest population per church building (after Hereford and St Edmundsbury and Ipswich).

We delight in having 108 church schools (nearly 50 are in our two Multi-Academy Trusts), and we have strong relations with many county and independent schools.

A broad range of church tradition is present around the Diocese, with many multi-parish benefices representing something of that diversity within their churches. Many of our clergy are familiar with the challenge of working across a variety of traditions and are comfortable with that. There are relatively few parishes that would want to campaign for a particular tradition, and many more that value the diversity within deaneries. The strongly relational ethos that undergirds the life of the Diocese binds people from differing traditions together and helps to maintain harmonious relationships around the Diocese, so that church tradition is rarely an issue. There are fewer than 10 parishes within the Diocese whose PCC has petitioned the Bishop of Norwich under the terms of the House of Bishops' Declaration on the Ministry of Bishops and Priests and are under the care of the Bishops of Richborough or Ebbsfleet.

Ecumenical relations are good, with church leaders meeting regularly. In most rural parishes, however, the only church is Anglican. This contrasts with the city of Norwich, where the Roman Catholic Cathedral of St John the Baptist is situated, and, as with the larger towns, other denominations and new churches are found and often flourish.



The Diocese is organised on an informal area system. The areas correspond with the three archdeacons of Lynn, Norfolk (Thetford) and Norwich. The Suffragan Bishops of Lynn and Thetford look after their designated areas with their respective archdeacons and take responsibility for the appointments, pastoral visitations, ministerial development reviews etc. within the archdeaconry.

The Archdeacon of Norwich, in consultation with the Bishop Graham, leads in these areas for the Archdeaconry of Norwich. However, Bishop Graham keen to be bishop for the whole Diocese and usually institutes or collates all clergy coming into the Diocese from outside and is keen to respond to invitations well beyond the city of Norwich. History means that the Bishop of Norwich is seen as a figure for the whole county in secular as well as church contexts. We have deliberately not made this a formal area scheme so that the boundaries are relatively porous.

The Diocese maintains, as a separate charity, a residential youth activity centre at Horstead. This is a major investment to which thousands of young people go each year, often through school trips.

The Vision of the Diocese of Norwich

Transformed by Christ: Prayerful, Pastoral, Prophetic

Priorities that flow from this vision

Prayerfully

- We will **deepen our prayer life and learning**, and provide a sense of belonging within worship offered in a range of styles for all ages.
- We will **equip people in evangelism** to find ways to share their faith during the week and be invitational to others to join the life of their local Church, recognising the particular need to engage children, young people and families.
- We will **live a life of generous stewardship** in response to God's gifts to us.

Pastorally

- We will promote and equip the variety of **lay and ordained ministries**, knowing that all are invited to hear God's call and selflessly respond in loving service.
- We will have honest conversations leading to decisions about the mission potential, viability and ways to ease the burden of our **church buildings**, many of which are treasured places of holiness, stillness and memory, whilst also exploring new possibilities for planting and nurturing Christian communities.
- We will encourage every church community and church school to be engaged somehow, often in partnership, in **loving service to its local, diocesan and world neighbours**.

Prophetically

- We will ensure an active priestly or lay worker/enabler **presence in our lowest economic communities** as we seek to address the growing inequalities in our society.
- We will seek to become a safe Church for all and one that embraces **diversity and radical Christian inclusion**.
- We will work to ensure that **ecological concerns** are integral to our life together as we care for our single island planet home.

The vision launched in 2021 has been warmly received across the Diocese, not least because it describes the role of every minister of the gospel and every parish/chaplaincy. The Diocesan Synod have agreed strategic projects around discipleship, ministry and the environment. These can be viewed here: www.DofN.org/VisionProjects2021-2026

Jesus said, "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10.10). We see the ministry of the whole Diocese as being about how we live **our life together** for the flourishing of every person in every place. Any vision should help the local church to flourish and grow in confidence that we are loved by God.

Jesus also said, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me" (Matthew 16.24). The heart of our mission is about being open to, and enabling others to discover, a life **transformed by Christ**.

We join in Christ's mission, conscious of the five marks of mission of the Anglican Communion, through responding to God and the world.

We will **prayerfully** proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom, rooting ourselves in Scripture and the sacraments. We will wait upon God in stillness, contemplation and intercession. Our corporate prayer, an ongoing conversation with God, will embrace traditional, fresh expressions, online and evolving models of being Church.

We will **pastorally** model the ministry of the whole people of God after Jesus the good shepherd. We will respond with loving service to the needs of the communities where we live and work, and teach, baptise and nurture new believers.

We will **prophetically** speak out and act, with the fire of the Holy Spirit, challenging injustice, confronting violence, and working for peace and reconciliation. We will seek to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

Being open to all of this will enable God in Jesus to accomplish **far more than all we can ask or imagine** (Ephesians 3.20). If we allow the Holy Spirit to breathe God's divine life into our human plans, much more will be made of them, for God can bring abundance from scarcity.

We are called to be faithful, as God is always faithful to us. By prayerfully placing the life of the Diocese where our sails can best catch the wind of the Holy Spirit, God will take us where God wills.



Serving people and communities

	240	licensed clergy
	300	active retired clergy
	160	are stipendiary
	130	Authorised Worship Assistants
	100	Licensed Lay Ministers

The boundaries between church and the wider community are often blurred in this Diocese, especially in rural areas. In a rural benefice most of the population may well have had experience of the incumbent's ministry through his or her conduct of funerals and services at festivals, all of which have missional potential.





Almost everywhere church buildings are regarded as important features of the landscape and cherished as such. Keeping them open daily is strongly encouraged, and in many places morning and evening prayer is said in them, as well as other weekday worship too, e.g. Messy Church.

Various fresh expressions of worship, discipleship and service have been pursued in both urban and rural parishes in the Diocese. However, in some places the parish system is under considerable strain, both in maintaining our buildings and in having enough volunteers. We are determined to respond in a helpful and creative way. We have established a pioneering initiative, the Diocesan Churches Trust, so that for churches where there is no local leadership and stewardship and that are not required for regular worship can remain open for visitors but be taken into the care of the Trust for a period of time, with basic insurance cover and annual maintenance.



Support for Clergy

The Parish Support Team at Diocesan House possess a strong ethic of service to the Diocese as a whole and we encourage clergy and parishes to get to know them personally.

The 900 year old Cathedral in the heart of Norwich, as the seat of the Bishop's oversight and teaching ministry, is at the centre of Diocesan life with many events held there. The Dean and Chapter see one of their core purposes as serving the Diocese and has many facilities (including a fine library) for clergy and parishes to use.

We seek to maintain our parsonage houses to a high standard since we want the base from which our clergy work to be comfortable, safe and homely, able to be used as a family home and a centre of hospitality where that is appropriate. Increasingly we are looking at how they can become net-zero.





The Bishops and Archdeacons seek to support clergy to thrive and discover life in all its fullness in Christ. They regularly visit parishes – valuing the witness of each worshipping community. They lead regular ministerial development reviews for clergy, together with a Review Team, in order to enable clergy to develop and grow in ministry.

We encourage a culture of life-long learning and ministerial development for all clergy (Stipendiary & SSMs). There is a bishop's teaching morning each term where expert speakers join us either online or in person. In addition, to CMD days and courses put on by the Parish Support Team, we collaborate with our partners in the Eastern Region, to provide courses for the various 'stages in ministerial life' including: the Incumbency Skills course for first-time incumbents, courses for those taking on new posts, through to courses for preparing for retirement.

There are also courses related to the challenges and opportunities of specific ministries and roles, such as Rural Deans.

An allowance of £450.00 is available every three years, which can be used for specific training and development events tailored to individual needs. Additional funding and support are also available for sabbaticals and study.

We are committed to the Covenant for Clergy Care and Wellbeing, and our Clergy Wellbeing Forum has been leading valuable work in implementing this. Likewise, a group implementing the *From Lament to Action Report*.

The Diocese has well-established counselling provision for clergy and their families. This supplements pastoral care provided by bishops, archdeacons & rural deans. Coaching and mentoring are available at any stage in ministry and can be especially useful in periods of transition or when a particular challenge is faced. Further details of our support for clergy: www.DofN.org/clergy.





Diocese of Norwich

Diocesan House, 109 Dereham Road, Easton, Norwich NR9 5ES

www.dioceseofnorwich.org   

Registered Charity No: 249318