

Benefice Profile

Hopton | Gunton | Corton 



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Introduction



The parishes of Corton, Gunton and Hopton became a single benefice in 2021.

We would like the new incumbent to continue to shape and develop this benefice, focusing on mission in these distinctive communities.

If you feel you could grow us, spread with us into our communities and enable us to grow in our discipleship and our service, we'd love to receive your application.

Our Vision



Our vision is to pioneer mission, to find innovative ways of bringing the people to the church and the church to the people, promoting the love of God to our communities.

What We Are Looking For



Theologically and liturgically flexible, in order to meet the differing styles of worship practised and able to reach out to people of all ages and diversity.



Interested in, and committed to, involvement with Christian faith and practice in the three local primary schools, especially the two Voluntary Aided church schools in Corton and Hopton.



A good communicator that's financially astute, with IT skills to "deliver" church to a wider community.



Being proactive in visiting, strong on pastoral care. Be visible, active and engaged in our community. Be robust with a good sense of humour.



Of deep faith and commitment in the service of God who can paint pictures with words and share their sound theological knowledge.

What We Can Offer You



The support of the PCCs, our committed congregations and pay all expenses in full.



Strong, well-established links with all three primary schools.



Positive links with Corton Methodist Church, Gunton Baptist Church and Gunton Woodland Burial Park.

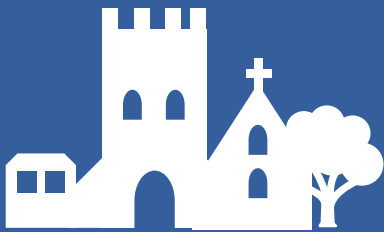


A four bedroomed rectory in Gunton, with a separate entrance to the study, built in accordance with the Green Guide.

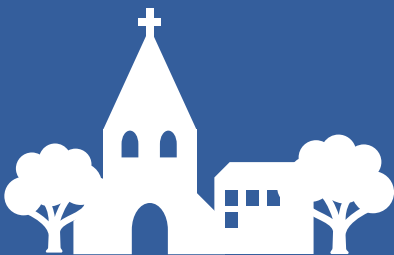


We will value you, respecting your rest-time, holiday time and time with your family.

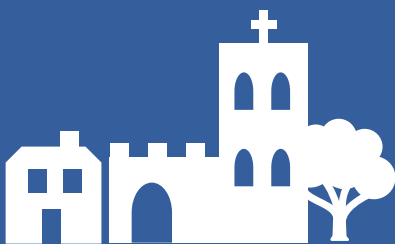
Our Communities



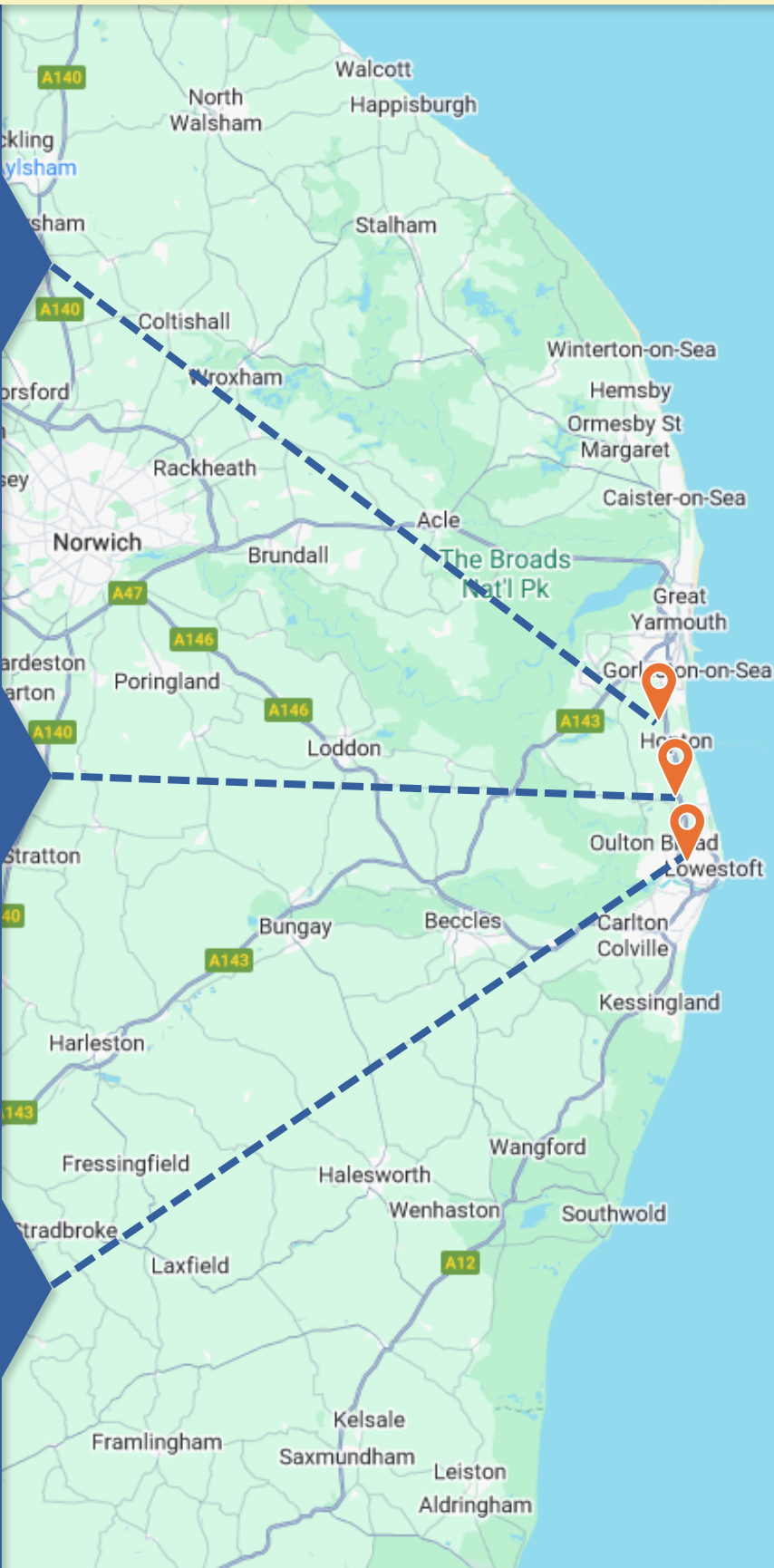
Hopton-on-Sea
Norfolk



Corton
Suffolk



Gunton
Suffolk



Our Communities



General Information

Our communities lie to the north of Lowestoft which is the most easterly town of the British Isles. They are part of the Deanery of Lothingland.

Whilst Corton and Gunton are two coastal villages in the county of Suffolk, immediately north of them is Hopton, another coastal village but now in Norfolk.

The A47 trunk road runs alongside all three communities.

Popular holiday and caravan parks are found in each parish. Holiday-makers from these resorts help to increase the church congregations.

The town of Lowestoft (the second largest in Suffolk) was traditionally a fishing port. The fishing industry has almost disappeared being replaced by servicing of the offshore wind farms. Tourism is a major source of employment.

Lowestoft offers good beaches and plenty of open space to enjoy nature. The Broads National Park and Carlton Marshes Wildlife reserve are nearby.

Our Communities



General Information (Continued)

There are three theatres offering a wide variety of entertainment and plenty of opportunities to enjoy music. The area is well served by a variety of supermarkets and retail parks.

Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth have frequent trains to both Norwich and Ipswich with mainline connections to London and beyond. Trains also connect, via Norwich to Peterborough and the Midlands.

The cathedral city of Norwich, within one hour’s drive, has excellent shopping, schools and entertainment to offer. There are good bus services to the James Paget University Hospital.

Close to Hospital



Retail Parks

Railway Services



Local Theatres

Bus Services



Award-winning Beaches

Nature Reserves



Local Theme Parks



Hopton-on-Sea

Hopton is a coastal village 4½ miles north-west of Lowestoft and 4 miles south of Great Yarmouth with a population of approximately 2,934.

The coastal protection for the village has been financed by the two Holiday industries in the village, Haven Holiday Village and Potters Resort (which is famous for hosting the World Indoor Bowls Championship). These resorts employ a large number of people from the village.

There is a wide range of age-groups, from young families to both young adults and pensioners living as couples or alone.

There are two shops and two pubs in the village, a doctor's surgery, a pharmacy, a dental surgery, a bowls club and a youth club.

There is one care home in the village, Ritson Lodge.

The village has a primary school with approximately 190 pupils.



Census Data



Population
2,934



Area (km²)
5.556

Data from 2021



Gunton

The parish of Gunton is a north-eastern suburb of the town of Lowestoft. The estimated population is 9,716, with a higher-than-average number of people in the 60+ age group.

Gunton straddles the A47 with three distinct housing estates. To the east of the A47 is a 1970's estate with privately owned homes, including The Rectory. To the west of the A47, there is a post-war council estate which includes some privately owned properties.

There is a Persimmon estate of privately owned houses built since 2000. Within the parish are two schools, Gunton Primary Academy and Benjamin Britten Senior Academy.

There are two small parades of shops that include a doctor's surgery, a pharmacy, a Post Office, a large Tesco supermarket, a large sheltered housing complex and one residential home where we take a service once a month.

There are four churches, Gunton St Peter and Gunton St Benedict churches, a large Mormon church and Gunton Baptist church.

Pleasurewood Hills theme park is on the north-east boundary of the Parish, next to a Warners Holiday resort.



Census Data



Population
9,716



Area (km²)
3.837

Data from 2021

Gunton (Continued)

Despite being residential, the area boasts impressive open spaces like Gunton Wood, sandy cliffs, dunes, and a wide beach.

Lowestoft town has a variety of shops including M & S, Aldi, Lidl, Tesco, Morrisons, Asda, The Range, Dunelm, and Wickes. Waitrose delivers to the area.



Census Data



Population
9,716



Area (km²)
3.837

Data from 2021



Corton

Corton village is situated directly on the coast, three miles north of Lowestoft town centre. The village includes a pub (with adjoining shop), playing field, sports pavilion and linked Community Hall.

The village community is very active, with groups meeting regularly in the Community Centre including Tai Chi, Bowls, Brownies, Ladies Group and various other fitness and social clubs. The Playing Field has two football clubs who regularly have use of it both junior and senior players. The ground also hosts a weekly car boot sale from May – October.

Corton has a population of approximately 1,450 people. The village has a Primary school with 123 pupils currently and a Methodist Church with whom we have a cordial relationship and have on occasion joined for joint services.

East Suffolk Council has designated land to the west of the village, on the east side of the A47 for a “garden Village” community of approx. 1400 houses and other amenities.



Census Data



Population
1,471



Area (km²)
4.526

Data from 2021



Our Churches



St Margaret's Church
Hopton-on-Sea, Norfolk



St Benedict's Church
Gunton, Suffolk



St Peter's Church
Gunton, Suffolk



St Bartholomew's Church
Corton, Suffolk

St Margaret's Church



St Margaret's is a Victorian church with beautiful windows and an ambience which welcomes people. We are a church open to different styles of worship and at our heart is the Eucharist.

Currently, we have an 11am Eucharist (when vestments are worn). On the second and fourth Sundays, we have Morning Worship with a Lay Reader, Authorised Worship Assistant, or a Lay Person.

We also hold regular craft fayres, concerts and a drop-in every Monday which is open to all.

Although we do not currently have any young families in our weekly congregation we work closely with the schools. Members of the church take 'Open the Book' worship in the Hopton primary school. The school regularly visits the church using it for both an education resource and for services.



St Margaret's Church

(Continued)



As of 2025, there are thirty residents on the electoral roll.

We have a toddler group called 'Little Footprints' which is a successful play and stay session, running weekly during term time. This group is run by church and other volunteers.

On special occasions the church has been well supported by the community and the regular attendance on a Sunday is around twenty-two.





Church Events Include;

- Monday Drop in for all.
- Craft Fayres throughout summer and autumn.
- Open The Book Worship taken into Hopton Primary School.
- School visits to church for both educational resource and services.
- Little Footprints Play & Stay for babies and children up to 4.
- Pet Service.
- Local concerts.
- All age summer fun day.
- Plant Sales run by local residents.
- Lite Bites and Lent Lunches.
- Baby Loss Awareness Week Ribbon Display.
- Christmas Samaritans Purse Shoeboxes.
- Christingles.
- Suffolk/Norfolk Historic Churches Trust Sponsored Cycle ride.

St Margaret's Church

(Continued)





St Margaret's Church

(Continued)

Location

Lowestoft Rd, Hopton-on-Sea,
Great Yarmouth,
NR31 9AH

Occasion Services

Yearly volume of
weddings, baptisms &
funerals / interments



2022 - 4
2023 - 2
2024 - 1



2022 - 7
2023 - 8
2024 - 3

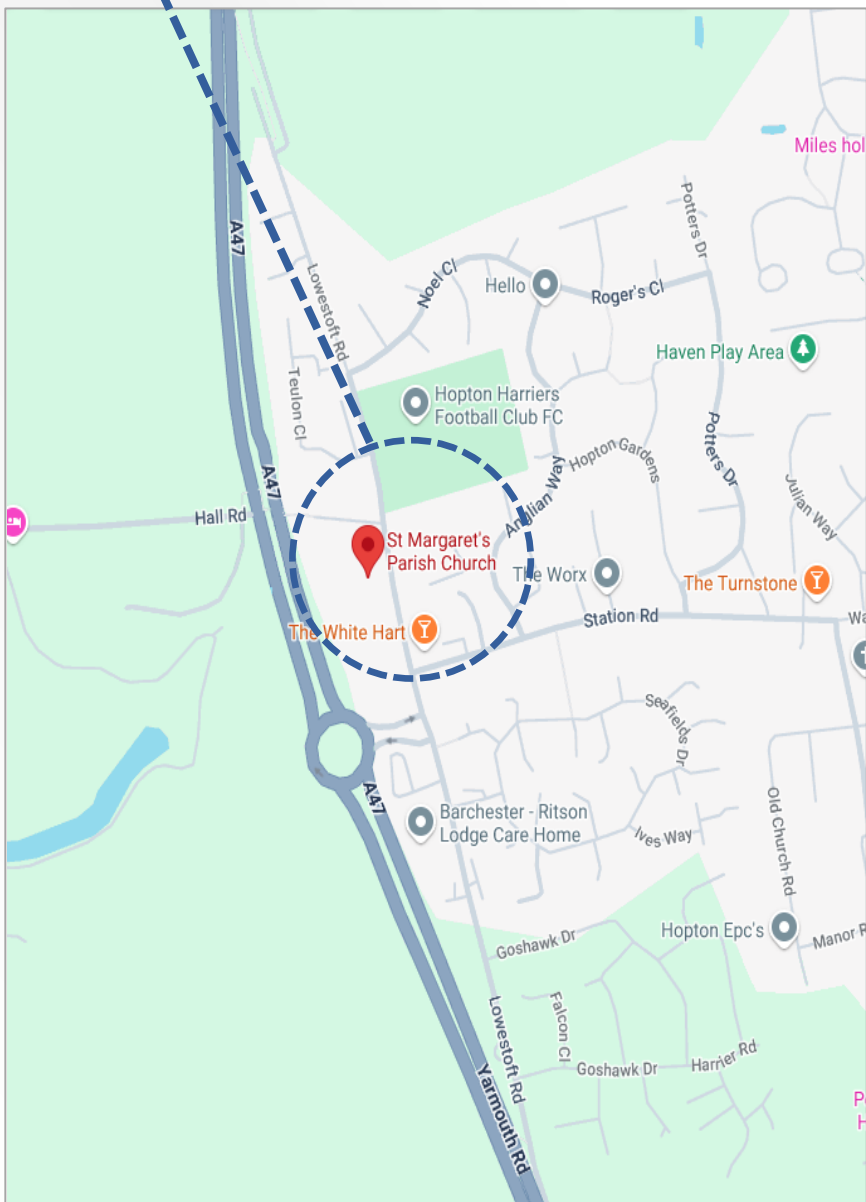


2022 - 11
2023 - 9
2024 - 6

Contact Details



01502
514774



St Peter's Church



St Peter's church is a small Norman round tower church, sited next to Gunton Woods and adjacent to Gunton Woodland Burial Park.

Recently an automatic electronic door lock and card reader have been installed. The church annex consists of a meeting room, kitchen, and toilets.

The annex hosts craft groups, a book club, a friendship club, and a sewing group. Gunton Woodland Burial Park and the church jointly host a monthly coffee morning to provide support for bereaved individuals.

The church owns thirty acres, primarily leased to Gunton Woodland Burial Park. Opening in 2016 and running as a charitable trust, the Park offers natural burials to people of all beliefs and none. Although independently run, currently two PCC members are burial park trustees.



St Benedict's Church



St Benedict's Church, constructed in 1957, was built to serve the council estate located to the west of the A47.

The facility was expanded in 2008 and now includes two halls, a vestry, a kitchen, and a refreshment bar.

Gunton Pre-school use the building every morning and three afternoons each week. A friendship group meet fortnightly and the WI monthly. The large hall is suitable for concerts and extremely popular fish and chip quizzes.

Both churches follow Common Worship and are considered an evangelical church. Services on Sunday alternate between the two churches. There is an organ at St Peter's but currently no organist available. St Benedict's has music from a pianist and a digital hymnal.

After major repairs over the past five years, both churches are now in good condition. Quinquennial inspections are due in 2025.



St Benedict's Church

(Continued)



In 2025 there are thirty-four on the electoral roll, most over the age of seventy years. Two congregants attend Deanery Synod, one of whom is Synod secretary. Our church family though small is committed, faithful and open to innovative ideas. Several residents support the church in practical ways.

We are fortunate to have a retired priest, an Anna Chaplain who is also an AWA and a LLM with PTO, who will help with services. Holy Communion is held in several parishioners' homes.





St Peter's & St Benedict's

(Continued)



St Benedict's

Hollingsworth Road
Lowestoft, Suffolk
NR32 4AX



St Peter's

36 Church Lane
Lowestoft, Suffolk
NR32 4LF

Occasion Services

Yearly volume of
weddings, baptisms &
funerals / interments



2022 - 2
2023 - 2
2024 - 1



2022 - 3
2023 - 0
2024 - 1



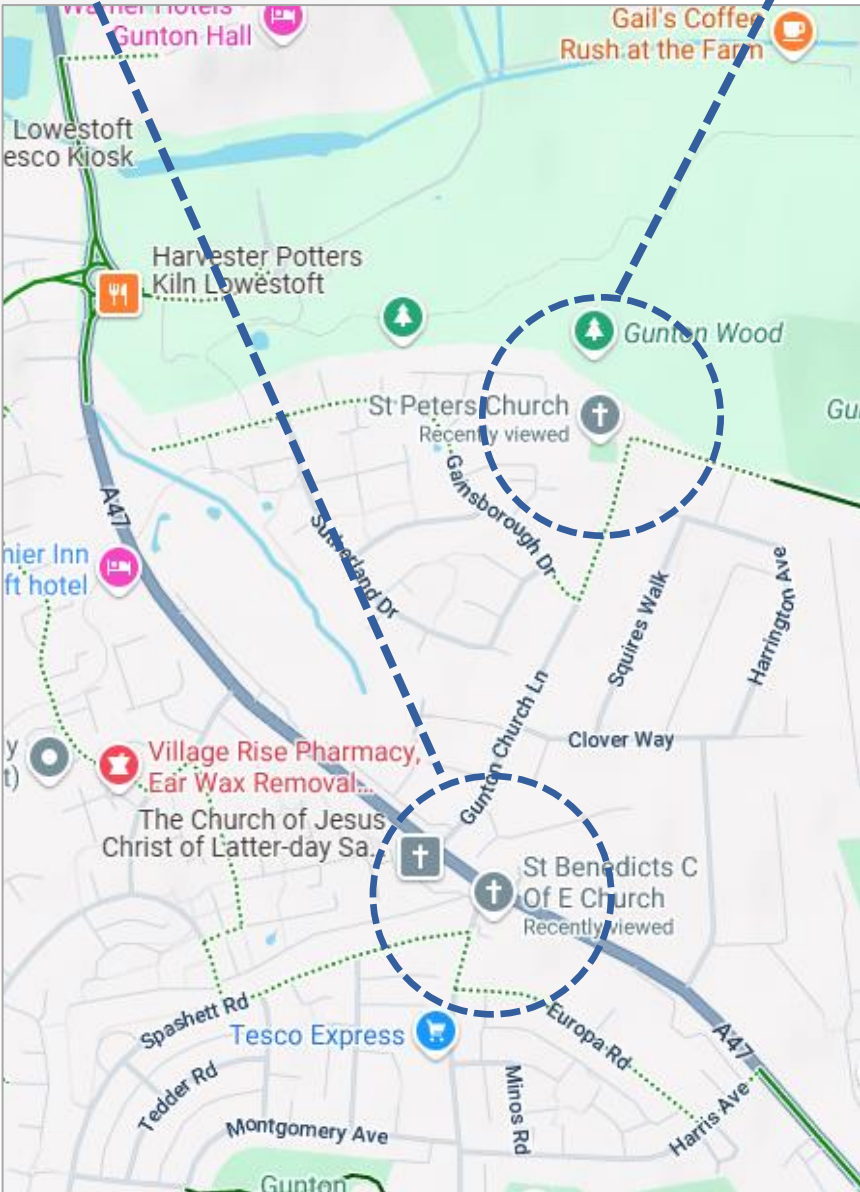
2022 - 12
2023 - 14
2024 - 19

(St Peter's & St Benedict's)

Contact Details



07939
561482



St Bartholomew's Church



A late fourteenth century, Grade II* listed building, with square west tower, nave and chancel. We use a renovated part of the nave as a meeting room, vestibule, kitchen and toilet.

The Church currently has two services a month (both a Sung Eucharist) with an attendance of 12 -15, electoral roll of 22, and with coffee following the service. St Bartholomew's is known as a friendly, welcoming place of worship by both local residents and visitors.

St Bartholomew's is also host to the Remembrance Sunday service for the 14th Lowestoft Scout, Cub and Beaver Group. With the Vicar taking on the (optional) role of Honorary Chaplain to the group and also leading its annual carol service.



St Bartholomew's Church

(Continued)



Social events held at the church are generally well attended, a variety of which are held throughout the year, and we are currently looking to hold more events encouraging family participation.

The use of the Church for both ministry and outreach or a community resource is slightly restricted by it being situated over half a mile outside of the village. However, there is a small car park at the church.

A dedicated team of church members keep the church interior clean and tidy. The churchyard is maintained to a reasonable standard.





Corton Church of England VA Primary School

The school is situated in the centre of the village. It has a well-established relationship with the incumbent and is keen to maintain this and build upon it in the future.

Head Teacher's Comments:

For me, the role of the incumbent covers many aspects: Essentially. It's developing relationships with all stakeholders, being present, being supportive, being a listening ear, being a role model and potentially having an awareness of challenges within a school.

- Getting to know the children, head and all staff.
- Getting to know the school's priorities and values are and supporting us to achieve them.
- Leading regular Collective Worship.
- Attending SIAMS preparation meetings.
- Being proactive in the development of our school value statement.
- Being a presence on our school website.
- Supporting the school community in a pastoral sense.
- Supporting the school in the additional role as governor.

Diocesan Inspection 2018:
Outstanding

OFSTED 2022:
Good



St Bartholomew's Church

(Continued)



St Bartholomew's involves itself as fully as possible in the life of the village, hosting a variety of annual events and supporting other village groups.

Annual Events Include;

- Shrove Tuesday supper.
- Good Friday coffee morning and craft makes.
- St George's Day fish and chip supper.
- Christian Aid fund raising breakfast.
- Strawberry Fayre.
- Open Church Saturday morning café (summer holidays).
- Suffolk Historic Churches Trust sponsored cycle ride.
- Harvest Supper.
- Christmas coffee morning and craft makes.
- Christmas Concert (currently in abeyance).

Additionally, the church supports the work of the local Gunton Foodbank, giving throughout the year and extra contributions from both the Harvest Festival and Advent Sunday services.





St Bartholomew's Church

(Continued)



Location

Church Lane, Corton
Lowestoft, Suffolk
NR32 5HU

Occasion Services

Yearly volume of
weddings, baptisms &
funerals / interments



2022 - 0
2023 - 1
2024 - 0



2022 - 1
2023 - 0
2024 - 0

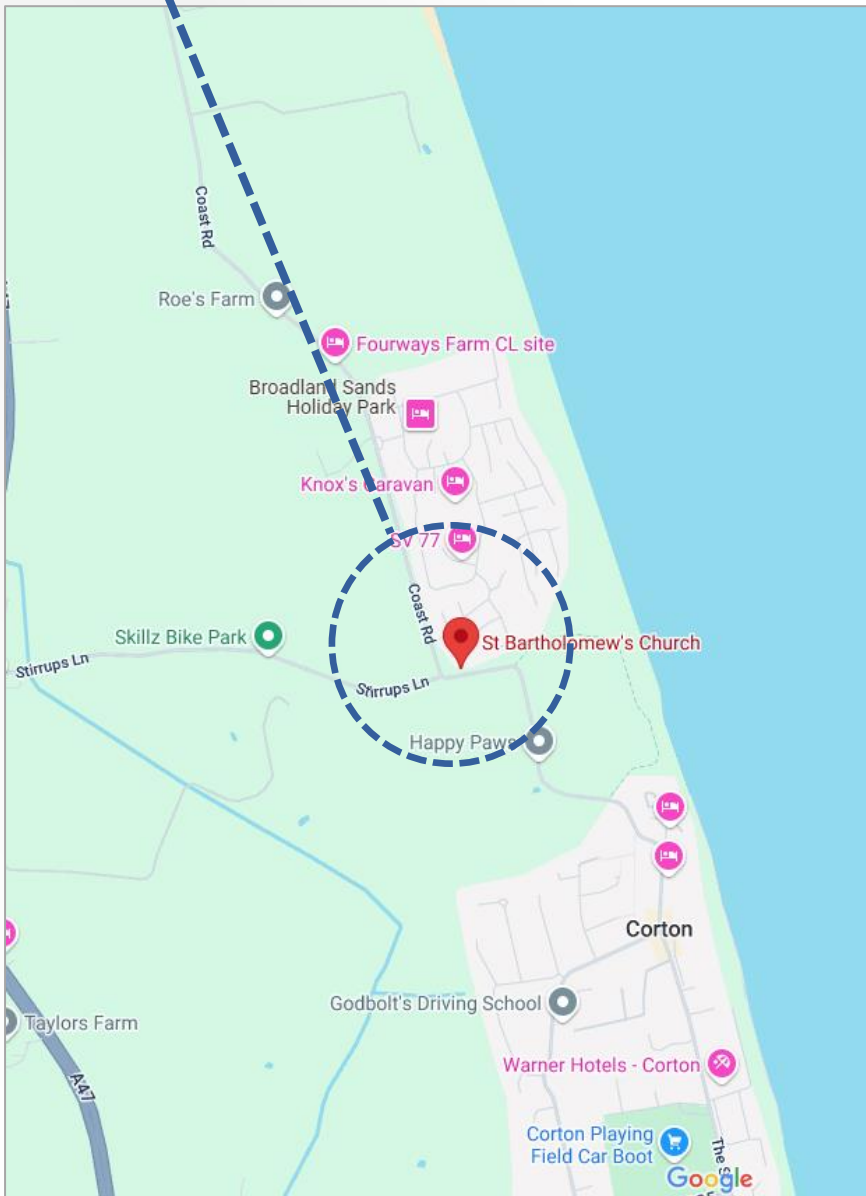


2022 - 7
2023 - 4
2024 - 3

Contact Details



07760
885157



Service Schedule



The pattern of services is;

Sunday	09:30	11:00	11:00
First in the month	St Benedict, Gunton (Morning Prayer)	St Margaret, Hopton (Eucharist)	
Second in the month	St Bartholomew, Corton (Eucharist)	St Peter, Gunton (Holy Communion)	St Margaret, Hopton (Morning Worship)*
Third in the month	St Benedict, Gunton (Morning Prayer)	St Margaret, Hopton (Eucharist)	
Fourth in the month	St Bartholomew, Corton (Eucharist)	St Peter, Gunton (Holy Communion)	St Margaret, Hopton (Morning Worship)*
Fifth in the month	A rotation of the four benefice churches		
Wednesdays 09:45	St Peter, Gunton, Holy Communion (from the Book of Common Prayer)		

*These services are currently led by a lay person.

The Rectory



The Rectory is situated in Gunton but with easy access, by road, to both Corton and Hopton.



It is comprised of a 1960s built 4 bedroomed house with a separate sizeable study (and adjoining toilet) together with 2 separate reception rooms and a third room leading off one of them.

The kitchen is of a good standard and includes a built-in cooker and hob.



Additionally, there is a cloakroom, a good-sized utility room, and a single garage. Upstairs are 4 bedrooms, a bathroom and a shower room.

There are extensive but manageable front and back gardens, with off-street parking.





Parish Share

Hopton paid its full amount of £10,000 for 2024, the parish has been allocated an amount of £11,746 for 2025.

In 2024 the diocese requested the parish of Gunton to find £36,072. However, due in part to the cost-of-living crisis and falling membership, we were only able to pay £15,000. In the same year, the diocese requested the parish of Corton to find £10,932, they were able to pay £8,199.

Safeguarding

As a benefice we are committed to the implementation of the diocese safeguarding policies. The current "Promoting a safe church" posters, with correct contact details, are displayed at each church.



Thank you for your consideration

We look forward to welcoming you

