

The Rt Revd Ian Bishop

Bishop of Thetford

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Rector of the Redenhall with Scole benefice

Dear colleague,

Thank you for your interest in this post, as together we seek to discern who God may be calling to serve as Rector of the Redenhall with Scole benefice. These notes are intended to supplement the information given in the Benefice Profile, adding a slightly wider perspective and with some further information.

The Parishes and this job

Harleston is a small market town in the south of the Diocese and a significant centre for the surrounding villages. It is a very attractive place to live and is surrounded by the beautiful countryside of the Waveney Valley. In recent years there has been significant housing development and part of the challenge of the role is to be able to draw the new residents of the town into the life of the Church.

Each of the seven villages (Billingford, Brockdish, Harleston, Needham, Redenhall, Scole, Thorpe Abbotts and Wortwell) has their own unique character and history and as a team they have been gradually working better and better together. There is a busy Church Office and admin support which allows some freedom to the incumbent.

A Phoenix from the Ashes?

Recently St John the Baptist Harleston suffered very serious fire damage, the full extent of which is unknown at the time of writing. The congregation are now worshipping at the local Roman Catholic Church thanks to their generosity. Whilst most of the damage appears to be superficial, whoever applies for the post will need to be able to listen well to a traumatised congregation, galvanise the community to get behind repairs, insurance claims and grant applications and be able to quickly form a vision for the future. Such events are very challenging but equally provide significant opportunities to re-set and re-focus the mission and to develop good relations with the local community, all of whom want to be supportive of the Church community.

St John the Baptist Harleston is the main worship centre and usually has a service each week and is usually open every day. It is a relaxed and warm-hearted place of worship. There is often artwork displayed, and remarkable creativity has been demonstrated by the Church. Whoever takes on the post must be able to rejoice in the breadth of Church of England worship and enjoy a mixed ecology of Church styles.

A key part of the significance of the post is Sancroft Academy which educates young people from 3-16. It is one of only two Church of England High Schools in the Diocese and as such has a very significant importance. The new incumbent would be expected to be a very good friend to the school, develop an excellent relationship with the headteacher, staff and governors and make their contribution to the worship life of the school. The new incumbent would be encouraged to make education a key focus of the role and to develop a good working relationship with St Benet's Multi Academy Trust and the Diocesan Board of Education.

The Diocese is at an important and exciting point with a new vision and strategy emerging under the diocesan bishop, and work is currently underway that will see the development of strategies for the outworking of the vision across the diocese.

We would love to hear from you if you feel that God might be calling you to these roles in this beautiful part of the county, or if you have questions about this role.

Diocese and Deanery

Under the leadership of the Bishop of Norwich, the Rt Revd Graham Usher, a vision is emerging for the Diocese – *Transformed by Christ: Prayerfully, Pastorally and Prophetically*. Work is currently underway on the strategies that will help us live out and deliver this vision.

Bishop Graham has written an Ethos and Culture Statement, available on the diocesan website - <https://www.dioceseofnorwich.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Our-Life-Together-2023-Updated-v2.pdf> - which gives details of our structures and the character of the Diocese.

The benefice falls within the Archdeaconry of Norfolk, and so under the care of the Bishop of Thetford (The Rt Revd Ian Bishop) and the Archdeacon of Norfolk (The Venerable Steven Betts). The benefice is in the Redenhall Deanery whose Rural Dean is The Revd Chris Hutton, Rector of the Earsham Group. There are 4 incumbents, 1 Team Vicar, 2 OLM Curates and 6 Licensed Lay Ministers (Readers) in the Deanery, together with a number of PTO clergy and Authorised Worship Assistants.

Colleagues will be very supportive and attendance at Deanery Synod and Chapter is an expectation, and all diocesan clergy are encouraged to give some part of their time and energies to the wider life of the Diocese.

Housing

A replacement Rectory has been identified, and further details of this will follow.

Patronage

The Patrons of the benefice are (jointly) The Bishop of Norwich; The Archdeacon of Norfolk; Exeter College, Oxford; The Martyrs Memorial and Church of England Trust; and Sir Rupert Mann.

Enquiries, Applications and Interviews

Applications can be made through Pathways at [Diocese of Norwich Vacancies | Church of England](#) and the Diocese of Norwich website at [Vacancies - Diocese of Norwich](#).

The forms, after we have removed the confidential declarations for safeguarding and other purposes, will be forwarded to the presenting Patron if appropriate.

The closing date for applications is Monday 10th November at 11.59pm, with interviews to be held on Monday 1st December.

Any priest wanting an informal discussion before deciding whether to apply is welcome to be in touch by telephone or e-mail with me (01953 528010 or bishop.thetford@dioceseofnorwich.org)

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in grey ink that reads "+ Ian Thetford."

The Rt Revd Ian Bishop

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