

# PARISH PROFILE

Team Vicar

for All Saints' Church, Swanton Morley

St. Andrew's Church, Hoe &

St Mary Magdalene's, Beetley with St Mary's, East Bilney

within the Dereham & District Team Ministry



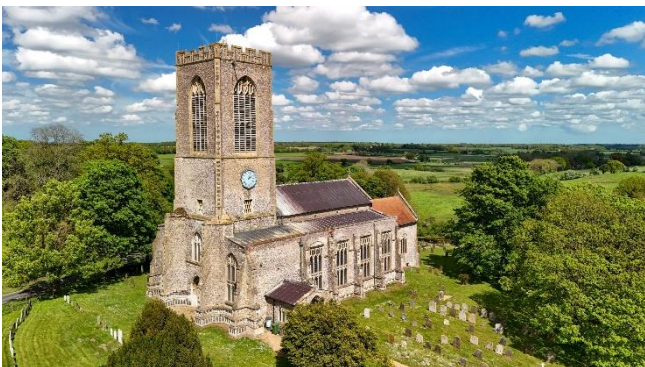
Dereham & District  
Team Ministry

Welcome to our Benefice profile. We hope that this will help to give you a good idea of who we are and where we would like to go. Our aim is to provide a window into worship and life in our village communities and our expectations from a new Team Vicar; with the anticipation that you can deliver, with God's Grace, more than we could ever hope.

## A vacancy prayer

Dear Lord, We thank you for your presence in every aspect of our lives and the long history of worship in Swanton Morley, Hoe, and Beetley with East Bilney. During this new phase of change we pray for your guidance and direction as we undertake the process of selecting a new Team Vicar. We ask for a smooth transition and for candidates, inspired by your calling, to expand your ministry and grow your church within our villages and benefice. Amen.

## A parable



Aerial photograph by kind permission of Justin Dack

There is a beautiful vista to be seen from Swanton Morley churchyard right across the Wensum valley. All Saints Church stands high above as people set out to walk through the fields, and out to the riverbank. In the distance is the beautiful church at Bylaugh but this cannot be reached as it sits on the opposite bank. Cows quietly graze near the river. It is all very beautiful and peaceful. Many walk this way and admire the view. It is a good place to think and to be away from the crowds

and the rush. Some may be lost in

thought, some trying to figure things out, some enjoying the company of others. This particular walk can be done in a circle with one of the churches for company all the way round. The pilgrim trail, 'The Walsingham Way', passes this way too from Norwich to the Shrine at Walsingham. Pilgrims and walkers, with churches in sight, and in their mix, searchers, truth seekers, doubters and sceptics. Yet for all this potential of engaging with people (Jesus talked about the fields being ripe for harvest) our churches have been mostly locked. The disciples were once 'locked in for fear of the Jews' the first Easter Day: we are not alone in our anxieties.



This is slowly changing with Swanton Morley open these last 18 months. Wedding bookings are increasing and barriers between the church and village are diminishing. The other churches in this part of the benefice are working towards being open too. There is a very real sense we are journeying in faith, hoping and praying for better, and wanting to engage with our communities. Will you journey with us in the name of Jesus who strengthens us with the same Holy Spirit?

## Vision for the future of our parishes

- We seek to centre our worship and discipleship on Jesus, and hope to be at the centre of our communities offering places of welcome, hospitality, prayer and worship.
- To extend our outreach to the community and to attract people of all ages to a welcoming, worshipping, caring environment
- To develop greater opportunities for teaching, and faith building
- To encourage the participation of the laity and community members as widely as possible.

The Benefice covers seven parishes covering 45 square miles in the centre of Norfolk. The eight churches range from small village churches through to St Nicholas' Church in Dereham, one of Norfolk's 10 'major churches'.

## Our Parishes

- Swanton Morley, Hoe, & Beetley with East Bilney – the vacancy
- Dereham & Scarning – The Team Rector, the Revd Canon Paul Cubitt
- Shipdham & East with West Bradenham -The Team Vicar, the Revd Laura Purnell. Laura is half-time in the parishes and half-time school's worker in the benefice.



## **Our Challenge**

Our challenge is to expand our average congregational and electoral membership across all age groups to reverse the static, and sometimes, decline in attendance from a current increasingly ageing population. A linked and associated challenge is to meet our requirement to deliver the full Parish Share to the Diocese.

New housing developments offer the opportunity for engagement with new community members and to bring the churches as a focal point of our villages.

To address the challenge in alignment with the vision and community expectations there is the opportunity to make changes appropriate for worship in the twenty-first century.

## **Our expectations of a new Team Vicar**

For a person who:

- is secure and confident in the Love of God.
- Is pastorally aware with good interpersonal skills.
- who can bring joy, light and hope.
- someone with sincerity and faith.
- who is outward going, approachable, energetic and keen to become involved with village life and events of all the villages.

And with this in mind:

- will help us grow the church into the community and the community into the church.
- will embrace a variety of forms of worship, both traditional and modern.
- will strengthen our faith through thoughtful preaching.
- will develop and expand our work with the village primary schools by leading Collective Worship and welcoming Swanton Morley school to church.
- will see the value in leading Bible Study
- will work with us to become financially viable for the future
- who can see beyond the existing service patterns and can see the possibilities of new worshipping communities
- is an enthusiastic diplomatic team player within the wider benefice
- will work together with the PCCs in shared commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

## What we can offer:

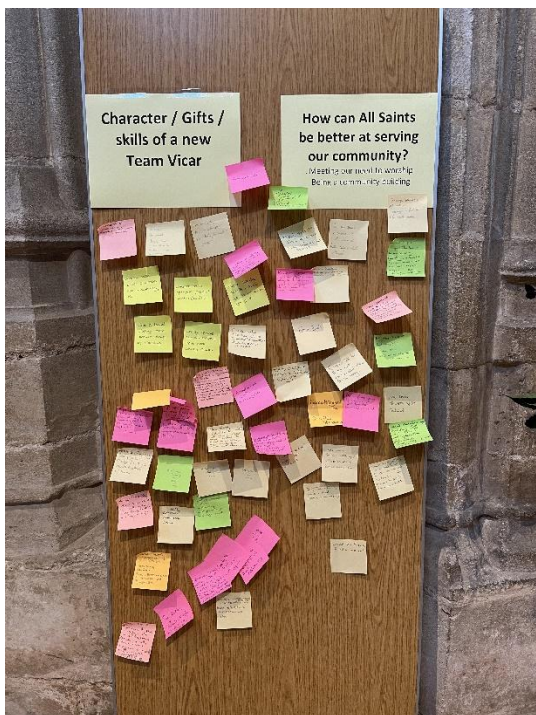
- a very warm welcome to whoever God sends to be our next Team Vicar;
- a supportive and cohesive Ministry Team;
- churches committed to loving God through our worship, service and fellowship;
- an appreciation that ministry belongs to all the churches in the benefice;
- access to the shared office and part-time administrator in Dereham with a part time administrator who is based in Church House next to St Nicholas' Church in Dereham. She works 12 hours a week spread over 3 days.
- full re-imburement of expenses incurred in the course of carrying out his/her duties;
- a commitment to respecting your rest day, time to study, recreation and annual leave;
- a modern comfortable four to five bedroom detached property in Swanton Morley with an enclosed garden, double garage and ample parking

## Our needs in a new Team Vicar

We asked the communities for their views about a new Team Vicar, the church and worship. Their feedback was categorized into eight themes from 60 responses.

Theme	Responses
Attributes: personal gifts and skills	21
Building/environment	9
Communication	2
Community engagement	15
Current perception of church	3
Events	4
Fund raising	4
Growth and worship	5
Service types	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>

A selection of the views can be summarized as follows:



- be able to create a good balance between parish and home life;
- to be a good listener and demonstrate management and pastoral skills, being able to relate with compassion, understanding and a sense of humour to people of all ages;
- be prayerful and capable of encouraging others in their spiritual development and prayerful life;
- lead our churches towards more active and imaginative forms of outreach, mission and engagement within our community and in partnership with other local churches
- fully embrace village life as a visible approachable presence;
- to show care, compassion and understanding ever mindful that behind the village idyl there often lies loneliness, poverty

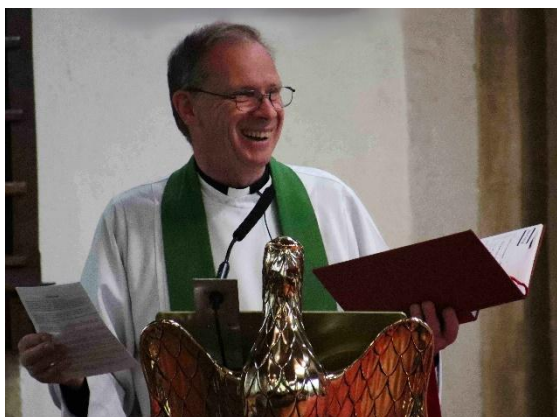
and isolation;

be able to support, direct, equip and build our PCCs to enable them to be more strategic in their planning and in turn to support the Team Vicar;

- to encourage and develop involvement in all church activities of worship, fundraising and social engagement with more people from our congregations and community, who may or may not have the time or desire to be a PCC member;
- To encourage collaboration between all three parishes.

## Meet the Team

### The Revd Canon Paul Cubitt



In 2020 the Rev'd Canon Paul Cubitt became Team Rector and in 2025 he was appointed Rural Dean for the Dereham in Mitford Deanery. Ordained for 29 years he has served in Herefordshire, Yorkshire and for the last 15 years Norfolk, his home county. He is married to Clare who has a background in early years teaching and they have two adult children: a paramedic living in Penrith and a train planner living in Basingstoke.

Paul has a passion for mission and ministry, for making church buildings fit for purpose, and building links with the local community. His sabbatical project in 2019 was to visit seventy major churches (over 1000m<sup>2</sup>) up and down the country asking the question 'Millstone or Mission Resource'. He is a training incumbent and a NSM part-time curate joined the Team in 2025.

He is a governor at two Dereham CE Schools, is a member of 'about Dereham' (<https://aboutdereham.org>) and co-founded the Dereham Action Partnership working towards the economic and social improvement of Dereham town centre.

Within the team ministry he has responsibility for Dereham and Scarning. As Team Rector Paul believes in being known across the benefice and seeks to balance his time at Dereham and Scarning with the rest of the benefice. The Team Vicar at Swanton Morley will also need to be known by the congregations at the other churches.

### **The Revd Laura Purnell – Team Vicar**

The Rev'd Laura Purnell was ordained in 2018 and served her curacy in Gaywood, King's Lynn. She came to the Dereham and District Team Ministry in 2022 with responsibility for Shipdham and Bradenham Churches. Laura also oversees and coordinates the schools work in the benefice. Laura has been instrumental for re-connecting with St Mary's Community Primary School and will hand this over to the new Team Vicar when they have settled in the post.



Laura is married to Martin who is an LLM in the benefice, serving in the Shipdham and Bradenham churches. They have 5 grown up children and twelve grandchildren scattered across the country and globe.

### **Lydia Crick – LLM**

Lydia was licensed as a Reader in September 2008. Her decision to become a Reader was a gradual one.

It was about 20 years ago at a licensing of a Team Vicar she realised, in the middle of the licensing, that God was calling her as well to a ministry. It took a little longer to discern a call to Reader Ministry. Serious illnesses gave Lydia a different view of what is important in life and she left paid employment to serve as a Reader.

Lydia was at University when she heard a preacher talk about how the father ran to meet his returning wayward son in the parable of the Prodigal Son. This has been one of the most important things she has learnt. God loves so much that He doesn't passively wait for us to come to Him but runs towards us: the father "had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him" (Luke 15: 20)



### **The Revd Michael Newey – Assistant Curate**



Michael was ordained deacon in 2025 and serves as a SSM Assistant Curate. He is married to Catherine, a Chartered Surveyor, and they have two adult children.

Michael has a strong commitment to social justice, particularly to tackling homelessness. Alongside his ministry, he works full-time as CEO of a local housing association; is interim chair of *Homes for Cathy*, a national homelessness lobby group; and a member of the Archbishop's

Council's Housing Project Oversight Committee. This initiative, inspired by the *Coming Home* report,

supports dioceses and parishes in responding to the housing crisis and reflects the Church of England's commitment to affordable sustainable housing.

Michael normally serves in the benefice two Sundays a month. When not involved in services, he worships at All Saints, Swanton Morley. Catherine is very supportive and often joins him, while remaining Treasurer of St Mary's, North Elmham, Michael's sending church.

He has extensive governance experience, having served as President of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and as Chair of Norwich Theatre. He currently serves on the Diocesan Property Committee, Spire Property Consultants' Board and liaises on behalf of the Diocese with the Trussell Trust.

Michael sees his calling as supporting incumbents, clergy colleagues and communities as they seek God together.

### **Padre, 1<sup>st</sup> The Queen's Dragoon Guards, Robertson Barracks, Capt. Richard Carter**

Robertson Barracks, Swanton Morley is home to 1<sup>st</sup> The Queen's Dragoon Guards (QDG) known as the 'Welsh Cavalry.' A Chaplain is assigned by the Royal Army Chaplain's Department (RACHD) for a two-year posting to QDG. This Chaplain may, or may not, be Anglican since the RACHD is multi-denominational.



The Chaplain's role is primarily to support the QDG in the three areas of 1) spiritual fitness, 2) moral guidance, and 3) pastoral presence while 'on camp' at Robertson Barracks and away on exercises and operational deployments. This affords the potential for a fruitful relationship between parish clergy and forces chaplaincy; especially when it comes to Remembrance Sunday and the annual QDG Advent Carols Service, both held at All Saints', Swanton Morley.

The longstanding military presence of the British Army, and the Royal Air Force before them, at Swanton Morley gives the place a distinctive feel to it. It is a quaint village, in a beautiful and rural part of the world, but with far reaching connections.

For information about the Queens Dragoon Guards see: <https://www.army.mod.uk/learn-and-explore/about-the-army/corps-regiments-and-units/royal-armoured-corps/1st-the-queens-dragon-guards/>

### **There are six active retired members of clergy who have Permission to Officiate (PtO).**

Three of these clergy reside in the area of the benefice: the Revd Dennis Ackroyd, the Revd Carole Prouse and the Revd Ken Pilgrim.

Carolyn Heydon was commissioned as an Authorized Pastoral Assistant in 2025 for Swanton Morley.

## Safeguarding Promoting a Safer Church

The PCCs of the parishes are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all, including children, young people and vulnerable adults. All post holders and volunteers are expected to work within the relevant safeguarding policies and procedures, including completion of the required safeguarding training.

This appointment is subject to acceptable pre-appointment checks, including a satisfactory Enhanced DBS Check.

There are four Parish Safeguarding Officers (PSO) in the benefice. Lydia Crick looks after this end of the benefice.

## Our services

With the benefice being so large there is no attempt to have benefice services as people tend not to travel. Unity comes with a shared vision to reconnect to our communities, the Ministry Team and the office. We seek to offer worship that is worthy, attractive and relevant for each context. The patterns and styles of our worship here have not changed for decades. We recognise a need to balance the familiar with being open to change to re-connect with our village communities. This will require sensitivity and wise timing. Special services throughout the year are held such as at the major Christian festivals of Easter, Pentecost and Christmas but also we celebrate Mothering Sunday, Harvest and national events such as Remembrance Sunday. In 2025 the churches focused on VJ-80 as many of the Norfolk Regiment were in the Far East. This year for the first time, East Bilney Church held an All Souls service.

Sunday Compline is streamed on our Facebook pages (Dereham, Swanton Morley, Beetley with East Bilney, Scarning and Shipdham) on a rotational basis across the benefice.

Across this end of the benefice there were a number of Christmas services in 2025 these being:

- Beetley – pre-school nativity (92 attendees)
- Beetley - carol service (68 attendees)
- Beetley – Christingle (26 attendees)
- East Bilney - carol service (33 attendees)
- Hoe - carol service (13 attendees)
- Hoe - Bethlehem Midnight service (22 attendees)
- Swanton Morley - Christmas Eve Christingle (around 190 attendees)
- Swanton Morley - informal community carols with Dereham Town Band with hot dogs, and mince pies (around 110 adults and 25 children)
- Swanton Morley - candlelit carol service followed with mince pies and mulled wine (44 adults 4 child attendees)



## Current Pattern of Sunday Services at All Saints' Swanton Morley

1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday	11.15 am Holy Communion
2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday	11.15 am Morning Praise
3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday	11.15 am Holy Communion
4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday	11:15 am Morning Prayer
5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday	09:30 meet at Hoe

Moving forwards there will be service of Morning Prayer each month at each church.

## Current Pattern of Sunday Services at St Andrew's Hoe

1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday	No service
2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday	9:30 am Morning Prayer
3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday	No service
Last Sunday	09:30 am Holy Communion (BCP)

## Current Pattern of Sunday Services at St Mary Magdalene Beetley and St Mary's East Bilney

Beetley and East Bilney are one ecclesiastical parish within the benefice (consolidated in the 19<sup>th</sup> century). They have been a combined civil parish since the 1930's. Worship alternates between the churches.

1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday	9.30 am	Holy Communion	Beetley
2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday	9.30 am	Holy Communion	East Bilney
3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday	9.30 am	Holy Communion	Beetley
4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday	9.30 am	Holy Communion	East Bilney
5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday	Joint service		

## Data on attendance

### Swanton Morley Facts and figures

#### 11.15 am Communion/Morning Prayer

	2023 (Adult/child)	2024 (Adult/child)	2025 (Adult/child)
Easter Day	39/2	39/12	32/3
Remembrance	135/12	54/6	84/8
Informal Carols with the Band	120+/30+	Held in the Village Hall	110+/25+
Lessons and Carols	48/2	41/2	44/4
Christingle	352/95	c.250 all ages	192 all ages
Christmas Day	38	26	26/5
Baptisms	3	5	3
Weddings	2	2	2
Funerals/Thanksgivings	4	4	3
Ave attendance	16/0	14/0	14/1

## Hoe Facts and figures

### 9.30 am Communion/Morning Prayer

	2023 (Adult/child)	2024 (Adult/child)	2025 (Adult/child)
Easter Day	14/0		
Remembrance	<i>Hoe attend Swanton Morley</i>	<i>Hoe attend Swanton Morley</i>	<i>Hoe attend Swanton Morley</i>
Lessons and Carols	25	15	13
Midnight Christmas Eve (10pm)	22	21	
Baptisms	0	2	0
Weddings	0	1	2
Funerals	0	3	2
Ave attendance	9	9	9

## Beetley Facts and figures

### 9.30 am Holy Communion

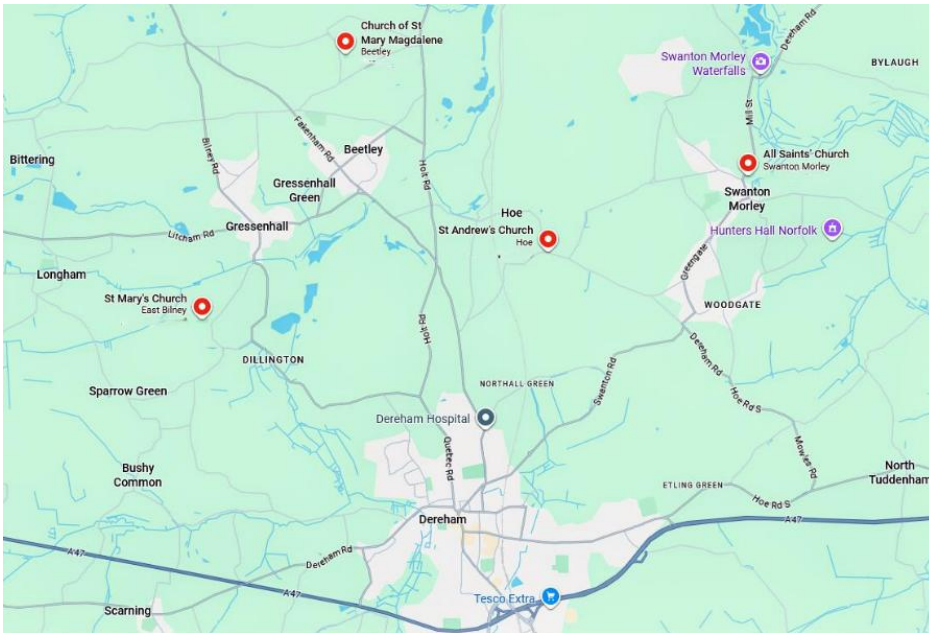
	2023 (Adult/child)	2024 (Adult/child)	2025 (Adult/child)
Mothering Sunday	20/14	No service	No service
Easter Day	At E Bilney	22/1	At E Bilney
Remembrance	At E Bilney	At E Bilney	At E Bilney
Preschool Nativity	42/23	No numbers recorded	66/26
Carol Service	14	60	64/4
Christingle	24/15	44/13	15/11
Baptisms	0	0	0
Weddings	1 blessing following civil marriage	1 blessing following civil marriage	1 blessing following civil marriage
Funerals	2	1	1 & 1 Memorial Service
Average attendance	7	6.5	5

## East Bilney Facts and figures

### 9.30 am Communion

	2023 (Adult/child)	2024 (Adult/child)	2025 (Adult/child)
Easter Day	17/1	At Beetley	14
Remembrance	14	12	16
Lessons and Carols	At Beetley	At Beetley	In addition to Beetley 32/1
Christmas Day	10	7	13
Baptisms	0	0	0
Weddings	0	0	1
Funerals	0	0	2
Average attendance	10	9.5	8.5

## Something about our churches



Our churches are all different in size and age. In some, this brings difficulties as with the resident bat population at Swanton Morley but ongoing work to exclude them has progressed since 2018. Swanton Morley has toilets and refreshment making facilities, storage areas and flower preparation room. All the organs at Swanton Morley and Beetley and East Bilney are regularly played by our excellent peripatetic organist. At present only All Saints' is open to the community on a daily basis,

although there are plans to open both Beetley and East Bilney churches in the near future as additional keys have been purchased. St Andrew's Hoe is applying for a grant to install an electronic door-opener.

Anyone qualifying for marriage within the benefice may be married at any one of the benefice churches.

A weekly news sheet is produced and is distributed at the Sunday services. The parish magazine *Link Up* is compiled and distributed monthly, by volunteers, to over 300 subscribers within the area covered by our four churches.

### All Saints' Swanton Morley

The church building is an imposing mediaeval church with fine views over the Wensum Valley. It has magnificent tracery and fascinating historical connections, in particular with Abraham Lincoln and the Pilgrim Fathers. The church seats around 300 people with a children's play area.

The Commonwealth War Graves enclosure contains the graves of the men who flew from RAF Swanton Morley in WWII.





All Saints' is a bright and lofty building sited above the Wensum Valley with stunning views from the churchyard.

The church has ample parking with additional space available in a field beyond.

The historic Patron of All Saints is Gonville and Caius College in Cambridge. It would be good to renew connections with the College who have an excellent choir.



There are 6 bells in the tower but no resident band at present. Ringers practice a couple of times a month and will ring for special services when requested, and for weddings. A project to augment the bells to 8 was started but due to illness this has stalled.

All Saints is the most attractive benefice church for weddings due to its size, setting, car parking, bells and good organist. There are seven weddings booked here in 2026.



To celebrate the 50th anniversary of RAF Swanton Morley, Glen Carter was commissioned to design a stained-glass window.

There is an active Friend's Group who raise funds for the church in imaginative ways. The annual duck race is a good fundraiser. The Friends held their first Christmas Fayre in the church in 2025. The kitchen and toilets were installed with the help of the Friends. There are plans to deal with roof leaks, window repairs, and the replastering of some walls. Steve Hyde chairs the Friends and is our fabric officer.

The Team Vicar usually chairs the Barrett's Charity, a small charity with an annual income of around £3,000. Half goes towards the upkeep of the fabric of All Saints, and the remainder is distributed to residents at Christmas based on need and pastoral circumstances (for example if there has been a recent bereavement).

The churchyard is closed for burials, but ashes can be interred.

A community coffee morning is held every Thursday morning and hosted by members of the congregation. Around 12 regularly attend, some are not yet church attendees.

See: <http://norfolkchurches.co.uk/swantonmorley/swantonmorley.htm>

## St Andrew's Hoe

St Andrew's is a small church serving the 200-300 living in 60 households across the parish and can seat 100. The current congregation is small and mature and the worship is traditional, following the Book of Common Prayer. Music to accompany singing is played through an amplifier. There is an open churchyard.



See: <http://norfolkchurches.co.uk/hoe/hoe.htm>

## St Mary Magdalene Beetley



The church has seating for 125. There are no facilities in the church. The organ is played for services. The church has Norfolk's lightest ring of 8 bells. They are in excellent condition but not often rung. Ringers from Swanton Morley are asked to ring for special services. The church is situated in 'Old Beetley' and has carparking opposite the old Rectory. There are a number of outstanding Quinquennial repairs that will need to be tackled including electrics and the east window. A series of fundraising concerts and events have raised nearly £9000 for the electrics and a grant of £4000 has been received for window repairs.



See: <http://norfolkchurches.co.uk/beetley/beetley.htm>

## St Mary's East Bilney



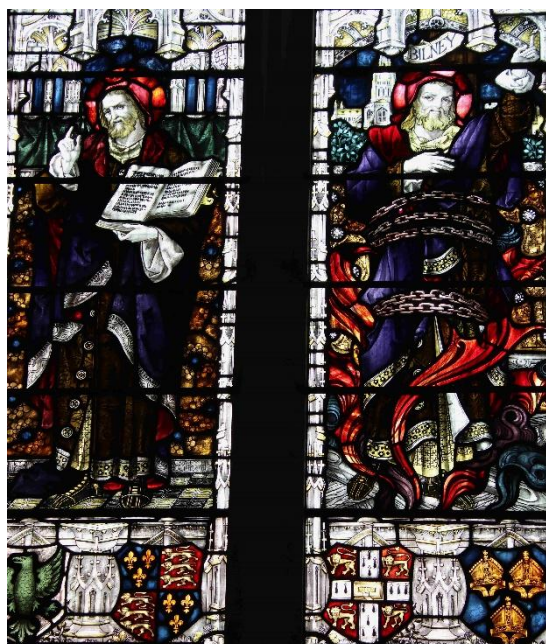
The church was largely rebuilt by the Revd Henry Collinson in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The church was restored about 20 years ago and is in an excellent condition. It seats 50 people.



One of the stained glass windows depicts the martyrdom of Thomas Bilney, considered to be one of the first English Protestant martyrs.

See:

<http://www.norfolkchurches.co.uk/eastbilney/eastbilney.htm>



## The Vicarage at Swanton Morley



The modern Vicarage, based in Swanton Morley, is a 10 -15 minute walk down Gooseberry Hill to All Saints' Church. It has 5 bedrooms (2 ensuite), although one has been used as a large study. Downstairs there is a snug by the front door which can be used for meeting parishioners. There is a very large lounge with log burner. The lounge opens into a good-sized conservatory and a dining room. It has a large kitchen and utility

room. There is a detached double garage. The enclosed rear garden is laid mainly to grass and has some fruit trees. The energy rating is C.

### Welcome to the Heart of Norfolk

We are situated at the Heart of Norfolk, the fifth largest county in England. Norfolk is a "Big Sky" agricultural and rural county with historical towns, villages and mediaeval churches. Local attractions include country houses, gardens and heritage railways. Most places within Norfolk are an hour's drive or less away from our local area including the beautiful North Norfolk coast, the Norfolk Broads and Thetford Forest.

Norwich is a University City with two Cathedrals, many churches, theatres, cinemas, museums and shopping areas and is easily accessible. The A47, currently being dualled from Dereham to Norwich, gives a direct route to both Norwich and Kings Lynn, both on train lines to London termini.

Local buses from our villages go to Dereham, the nearest town, and from there link to Norwich, Kings Lynn and Peterborough.

Dereham is an expanding community with a population over 20,000. It is a busy town with a market on a Tuesday and Friday. It has a range of supermarkets, independent shops, banks and cafes. Amenities include the Memorial Hall, which hosts local and professional drama as well as the occasional concert, a cinema, a leisure centre with swimming pool and gym, a golf course, bowls clubs, tennis courts, various sports clubs for all ages, playing fields and easily accessible open spaces. The Mid Norfolk Railway is a popular tourist attraction. There are two museums in or near the town and many interest groups and societies.

Green Pastures in Dereham is a well-resourced Christian bookshop.

There are several residential care homes in the Benefice including two with a strong Christian ethos. Dereham Hospital provides professional rehabilitation services plus a range of clinics and a 20 bed ward. There is a Care home in Swanton Morley Lincoln House and a retirement village called “Woodgate Park”. There is another Care home at East Bilney, Bilney Hall, which also cares for those suffering with dementia.

## The Villages

Each of our villages has a Village Hall offering a wide range of amenities, in some these include a licensed bar, meeting rooms and playing fields. Swanton Morely has three sites, including the Village Hall, that are suitable for hosting wedding receptions.

## Swanton Morley



Aerial photograph by kind permission of Oli Parnell-Cook

*Swanton Morley is, and will continue to be, a great place for our children to grow up and make their homes, with a real sense of community. To preserve and enhance the history, rural aspect, natural environment, attractive outlook, village atmosphere and unique natural beauty, for all the community to enjoy, whilst embracing a prosperous and sustainable future as a place where people choose to live, work and visit’.*  
Extract from Swanton Morley Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan.

The population of Swanton Morley is 2073 (2021) and is due to rise when Robertson Barracks, currently home to the 1<sup>st</sup> The Queen's Dragoon Guards, closes in 2031 and is turned over to housing. It will then be the largest village in Breckland.

The river Wensum flows through the village and has a lovely riverside walk. The waterfalls are a popular bathing area in the summer.

Swanton Morley is identified as a ‘Local Service Centre’ as it has a bus service, school, GP surgery and village shops and post office.

## **Hoe**

There is no village centre and apart from St Andrew's Church and Hoe & Worthing Villages Hall, which sits by the churchyard, there are no gathering places.

Hoe and Worthing are two small villages but form one Parish Council. Worthing Church is in another benefice. The population is 159 living in 60 households. The Village Hall is owned by the PCC and has been leased out to a small management team to maintain and run.

The Mid Norfolk Heritage Railway runs through the village. There are plans for the line to continue further north to the old County School stop, north of North Elmham.

The village lies north of Dereham and was for centuries a chapel of ease to St Nicholas's and was looked after by the Vicar of Dereham. It was rebuilt in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the tower taken down 100 years ago. It seats 50 people.

Much of Hoe lies within a conservation area. There is good walking on Hoe Rough, common land adjoining Beetley parish.

## **Beetley and East Bilney**

Beetley is situated 3 miles north of Dereham.

The population of Beetley & East Bilney is around 1,800. Old Beetley is the historic village with the parish church. The expansion of the village was southwards with much of the newer housing a mile from the old centre and around the new school. In Beetley there is an active Village Hall and a well attended Methodist Chapel.

Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse is on the village boundary and attracts many visitors from March – October.

East Bilney is about 5 miles from Dereham. It is a long spread-out village, situated in open countryside with various footpaths. Visitors and residents use the well-trodden walks in and through the village with one walk passing through the grave yard next to the church

## **Schools**

There are 13 schools in the benefice. The Revd Laura Purnell has a school's worker role within the benefice. A key part of her work is to build new relationships with the secondary schools in Dereham. Her role is not to take away our involvement with the schools in the parishes we cover although she is very happy to help and work with the Team clergy.

## **Swanton Morley**

Little Swans Pre-school are based at the Village Hall [Prospectus](#) | [Little Swans Preschool](#)  
Ofsted 2022 Good.

Swanton Morley (CofE) VC Primary School. The Team Vicar is a governor of the school.  
<http://www.swantonmorleyprimary.co.uk/>  
Ofsted 2024 Good. 178 on roll.

The headmaster, Matthew Richards, is a committed Christian and has contributed the following statement on the school's ethos and values.

At Swanton Morley VC Primary School, the vision is for our children to learn to value and love themselves. With a strong sense of self, they are able to show the same respect, love and duty to others, including taking care of the natural environment. Belonging to our school means children flourish spiritually and emotionally. They leave us as part of a wider community ready to continue their growth, understanding the heart of our vision to: **'Love your neighbour as yourself.'**

Our vision is taken from **Mark 12:31** and is underpinned by our school values taken from **Galatians 5: 22-23** where we encourage and model the 'fruits of the spirit': **love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.**

Our school is built on the basic premise of working hard and showing kindness to one another and our recent Ofsted inspection (Dec 2024) directly commented on this:

*"Pupils feel they belong in this warm and friendly school. The school's vision, 'Love your neighbour as yourself', makes a tangible impact on pupils. There are kind and caring relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils feel they are listened to, are safe and know that staff will help them with any worries they have. This is a supportive and nurturing community where everyone gets along well with one another". (Ofsted Report – December 2024)*

## Beetley

Beetley and District Pre-school is set in the grounds of St Mary's Community Primary School. Ofsted 2022 Good.

St Mary's Community Primary School, Beetley.  
Ofsted 2023 Requires improvement. 186 children on roll.  
[www.beetleyschool.co.uk](http://www.beetleyschool.co.uk)

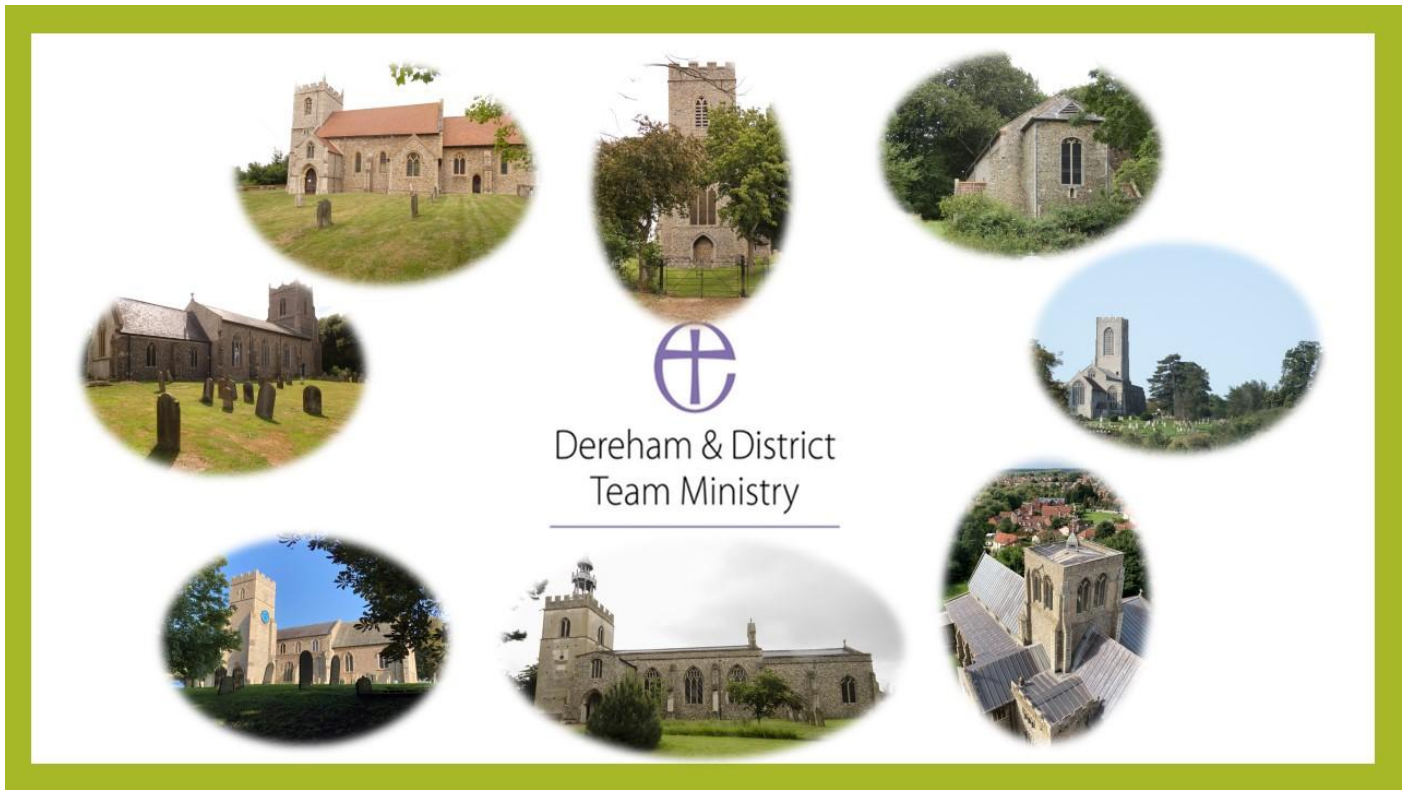
The school has had little connection with the church in recent years but our Team Vicar at Shipdham has opened doors.

## Catchment Secondary schools are in Dereham KS3 & 4

Dereham Neatherd High School  
Ofsted 2020 Good. 1162 students on roll.  
See: <https://www.neatherd.org/>

Northgate High School  
Ofsted 2023 Good. 1160 students on roll inc Dereham Sixth Form College.  
See; <https://www.northgate.norfolk.sch.uk/>

Dereham Sixth Form College  
See: <https://www.dsfc.org.uk/>



<https://www.derehamanddistrictteam.org.uk/>