

Trunch Group of Churches

Bradfield • Gimingham • Knapton • Mundesley
Paston • Swafeld • Trunch



Trunch Group

Appointment of Rector

Spring 2024

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A warm welcome

Hello and welcome to the Trunch Group of parishes and churches in North Norfolk. This document will give you an insight into what to expect if you decide to apply for the post of Rector. It has been compiled by a team of local representatives and reflects how we see things at the moment, how we envisage the Group developing and growing over the next few years, our aspirations for the delivery of ministry and pastoral support, and our ideas for the long-term sustainability of seven historic church buildings and their associated heritage.

BUT... we're open-minded and would like to explore and discuss different options! We know we face a whole bunch of challenges and need to find new ways of ensuring that the church is relevant to as many people as possible. We've already made progress with innovative initiatives such as Café Church, promoting the wider use of the spaces and facilities in our church buildings, and providing outreach services including our warm hub and community larder. However, we also recognise that there's probably a lot more we might be able to do and we'd love to hear from you with your ideas. We have a willing, supportive and active leadership team and we're excited to see what God has planned for our future!

So, if you think that the Trunch Group sounds like the sort of place you could be interested in, please read on. In a nutshell, we are hoping to welcome someone who evidences their Christian conviction and their pastoral heart in the way they build relationships and deliver ministry, someone who is comfortable with contemporary and traditional worship and who will help us deepen our faith and discipleship. We are an inclusive and broad church with an attractive and varied pattern of Christian worship, and we are committed to outreach and social justice. We would like our new Rector to be empathetic and perceptive, to be effective in assuming both personal and collective leadership styles according to circumstance, and to help us all to nurture our gifts in a collaborative and enabling environment. Oh yes, and finally, a good sense of humour will definitely not go amiss!

Over the next few pages, you'll find more detail about the area, what it's like to live and work here, our current ministry, pastoral and community engagement framework, our successes and challenges, and what we're looking for in our next Rector. We've also included a snapshot of each of the churches and villages to give a flavour of the make-up of the Group and the resources we manage and oversee.

If after reading the document you're still interested, we'd love to hear from you!

Trunch Group of Churches

Vacancy Working Group January 2024

Part 1 – What we hope for in our new Rector

To support current activities in helping us meet our aspirations for the future, we have high expectations of our new Rector!



Part 2 – Profile document

So, would you like to be our new Rector? Hopefully the following will help you to crystallise your thoughts – read on to find out about us, our place and where you'd be living. Firstly, a few words from the document authors.

The Trunch Group profile team – in our own words...

We represent our five PCCs, our seven village churches and Café Church, and have worked together over the past few months to produce this document.

"I am the Churchwarden at Knapton church and am also the Benefice Safeguarding Officer. I have recently retired from working for the NHS and am enjoying my freedom!" – Allison

"I was Churchwarden at Knapton church from 2008 to 2022 and am now treasurer. During that time, which spanned the previous interregnum, I oversaw a major £365,000 refurbishment project completed in 2018 which included the installation of kitchen and WC facilities. I am an active member of the church family and sing in the ladies' choir which supports our weekly services across the Group" – Liz

I am Churchwarden at Trunch, Swafeld and Bradfield churches. I was a scientist and a JP, specialising in youth court work, and a churchwarden in Cambridge. I was also a leader with Girlguiding and a trustee on the Executive Board. I am now President of Girlguiding Anglia. – Rosie

"I am Churchwarden at Mundesley church. I am busy fundraising to support our latest project to install solar tiles on the chancel roof" – Bob

"I am part of the leadership team for Café Church and am a singer in the worship band. I have a huge heart for community work, particularly with elderly people and those with special needs" – Julie

"I have been involved with the Trunch Group churches for fifty years, twenty of which I have spent as Churchwarden at Bradfield church. I co-lead a fortnightly house group and regularly lead intercessions at our group services" – Meg

"I'm a retired GP and am representing Gimingham church. I also love attending Café Church as well!" – Roger

"I'm Churchwarden at Paston church and am a former local authority chief executive. Over the past four years I've been project managing the Paston Community Project which has transformed the interior of the church to create a flexible multi-use space with kitchen and washroom facilities" – Philip

"I have acted as independent adviser to the team. I am a Reverend Canon who retired from stipendiary ministry in 2017 and normally offer one or two services a month, including stepping in at short notice if necessary. I am also the Bishop's representative for retired clergy in our deanery and I rejoice in diversity and inclusivity" – John

a) About the Trunch Group

A brief overview

The Trunch Group of parishes and churches is located in northeast Norfolk and comprises the seven villages of Bradfield, Gimingham, Knapton, Mundesley, Paston, Swafeld and Trunch. It is a rural, coastal area dominated by agriculture and tourism and the high quality of life makes it popular with second-home owners and retirees. However, Mundesley has flourishing infant and junior schools and recently completed housing developments in Mundesley and Knapton have provided affordable homes for younger local families.

Within the Group, Mundesley is the main service centre with a range of retail and community facilities. The vibrant and historic city of Norwich is just 45 minutes away by car, or by train from neighbouring North Walsham, connecting at Norwich station with a direct twice-hourly link to London and other regular services to Cambridge, Stansted Airport, Peterborough, Sheffield and Manchester.

Trunch Group comprises seven Grade 1 and 2 listed churches, including two now designated as chapels of ease, collectively supported by five parochial church councils. Traditional and festive worship is hosted on a rotational basis and Café Church is held in Mundesley Community Rooms. Our outreach and community engagement projects and events take place in the Community Rooms and in churches across the Group

How we see ourselves now

We are an inclusive church and welcome all people to join us. We do not shy away from difficult and controversial issues: for example, there is long-standing support amongst the Group for the ordination of women and more recently for the introduction of same-sex marriage. However, we are also aware of the sensitivities that surround current debate and are realistic about finding pragmatic solutions which can accommodate differences of view without simply becoming meaningless compromise.

The Trunch Group is on a journey of transition towards greater integration, cooperation and partnership. We have established a group leadership team involving the ministry team and churchwardens and there is a real sense of energy, enthusiasm and support. We hope to work towards a structure which continues to meet the requirements of each of our member churches at a local level whilst simultaneously maximising the benefits and efficiencies that come from positive collaboration.

For traditional worship, we've seen a significant shift in mindset away from individual parochial congregations in favour of a more fluid group-wide congregation which moves from church to church with the weekly rota, resulting in fewer but better attended services (please see indicative service schedules on pages 16/17). However, the current demographic profile is middle-aged to elderly and overall numbers are slowly falling.

In contrast, Café Church, which meets weekly outside main holiday periods and offers an alternative, informal style of worship, is a great success with a growing membership. Likewise, our outreach projects, including the community larder, warm hub and services and events for Ukrainian refugees, and our community engagement activities such as concerts, cinema nights and art exhibitions, attract a diverse range of people to participate in a welcoming and safe environment, demonstrating the church's caring and non-judgemental role both in helping those in need and through inviting all to enjoy socialising in our church buildings.

Our challenges which are set out below are not unique but clearly influence our thinking about joint-working and planning for the future:

- **Capacity** – many of the activities currently taking place rely on a small cohort of willing volunteers.
- **Funding** – in 2023 we paid 75% of our parish share and each PCC made a contribution to group funds which support specific group-wide expenses. Current income levels will not sustain the Group in the long-term and our church buildings require ongoing investment in repair and maintenance and in some cases, significant capital improvement.
- **Congregations** – for traditional worship, we have a stable but ageing core congregation which is slowly contracting, a trend we really hope to reverse.
- **Community outreach and pastoral support** – we have established a strong focus in these activities but volunteer resources are limited.

Our aspirations and hopes for the future

Our vision is of a flourishing church in all seven villages although we appreciate that to achieve this, we must tailor our offer to meet local needs and expectations. This will require us to be innovative and flexible and to accept that different people have different perceptions of what 'church' means. Successful engagement will only be achieved through better understanding of our local communities and through delivering a range of solutions focusing on moulding an increasingly dynamic ministry and finding ways to secure sustainable futures for our historic church buildings and their unique heritage.

We very much hope that our new Rector will live out their faith in a variety of ways which are appropriate to different situations, whether in delivering ministry through both traditional and contemporary worship, engaging with local people at community events, or celebrating or empathising with individuals and families in times of joy and grief. We also hope that our Rector will be comfortable in adopting a genuine partnership style of working with the Leadership Team and that they will share our enthusiasm for and take up the mantle of growing the Trunch Group around greater levels of participation, particularly amongst younger people, through building a stronger rapport with all sectors of our local communities, and through continuing to look for innovative solutions which will land well with different age groups, particularly in how we design and manage patterns of worship and, increasingly, how we further develop and resource outreach.

- We plan to continue to strengthen the management and oversight of the Group through further developing the Leadership Team in partnership with our five PCCs. Because of legal and logistical obstacles, we are not looking to create a single Group PCC but instead envisage a two-tier framework whereby local PCCs remain responsible for the church buildings and churchyards, and the Leadership Team acting as a Joint Council through a process of upward delegation assumes collective responsibility for Group-wide ministry and for strategic and operational planning and decision making. The Leadership Team will continue to include representation from all PCCs. We appreciate that such a structure must be legally constituted. We are unable to move forward during vacancy but hope that following appointment of our new Rector, they will be able to explore options further with our Archdeacon.
- We need to find ways of increasing income from regular giving and from maximising the potential of our church buildings without compromising their inherent characteristics and qualities. We have introduced the Parish Giving Scheme and are encouraging electronic payment to provide greater certainty around monthly income levels, and we are looking at the suitability of our church buildings, including through repurposing, to support appropriate activities which will generate additional revenue, for example community use, events such as concerts and exhibitions, education programmes and by growing the numbers of visitors.

- We want to make every effort to attract new church members, particularly younger people, both to traditional worship and Café Church, and to strengthen the bond with our existing congregations, such as through Alpha courses and house groups and by widening the types and styles of services on offer. We recognise that we can further develop our engagement with local schools and groups such as Mundesley Brownies and Mundesley Air Scouts, and hope that our Rector will take a lead in forging these links.
- We need to increase the impact of our environmental sustainability and conservation credentials through promoting eco-church and reducing our energy footprint, and maximising the potential for nature to flourish in our churchyards.
- We wish to build on the successes to date of our various outreach projects. We know that they are providing real benefit to the local community and for some people have created a bridge to further explore what the church is all about. However, our schemes must stand alone without any religious pre-conditions being imposed on participants. Meeting social needs will remain the overriding driver.
- We will need to find additional resources to support growing demand for pastoral care as we face the increasing challenges posed by our elderly residents.
- We want to ensure that our churches and our community outreach and pastoral activities offer children and adults alike a safe and secure environment. We are committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and vulnerable adults. We follow the House of Bishops guidance and policies and have a dedicated Benefice Safeguarding Officer.

Ideally, we'd like to be the 'go to' agency in our area, where people can feel confident in wanting to explore the concept of faith on their own terms and in their own way, where they can ask for practical help, and where in time the community and the church will derive demonstrable mutual benefit.

Our resources and what we can offer

We have seven beautiful listed church buildings, some with considerable potential. We have the multi-use Community Rooms in Mundesley which host a variety of functions ranging from Café Church and other informal church gatherings, to catered events and meetings, and the community larder. The Rectory is in Mundesley and a number of individual residents open their homes for specific occasions ranging from house groups to open gardens and village fetes.

We have ambitious plans for some of our church buildings such as at Paston where an internal reconfiguration has created a flexible open space with kitchen and washroom, and at Swafield where the aim is to remodel the nave and provide the facilities needed for it to serve as the village hall and local community cinema and theatre. Mundesley church regularly holds concerts, Trunch and Swafield host concerts, plays and cinema screenings, and Gimingham organises an annual flower festival and a decorated Christmas tree festival. Mundesley church, which is located in a conservation area, has just obtained planning permission to install solar tiles as part of its energy efficiency cost-saving initiative.

So, although we have limited bricks and mortar resources, we make up for this with energetic involvement and a strong spirit of teamwork and volunteering. We have active and committed PCCs and an enthusiastic Group Leadership Team consisting of the ministry team and churchwardens who are ready to work with and support our Rector. Our ministry team comprises an assistant curate, two licensed lay ministers and three authorised worship assistants, and we also enjoy the support of two retired clergy who live in the benefice and who regularly officiate at Sunday services. All members of the ministry team are actively involved in different aspects of worship and pastoral care. Collaborative forward planning enables us to roster a rolling programme of Sunday and mid-week worship, as well as multiple festive services at Christmas and Easter, and Café Church which additionally arranges and leads its own weekly sessions.

Finances are stretched but we appreciate the need to maximise payment of parish share to support the future wellbeing and diocesan resourcing of the Group. In 2023, we paid 75% of the requested total and during 2024 are doing all we can to move as close as possible to 100%.

Finally, we recognise that there can be many and diverse calls on our Rector's time in addition to the core role of coordinating and leading arrangements for worship. As a Group we are fully supportive of the Covenant for Clergy Care and Wellbeing which has been formally adopted by all five PCCs who endorse its key principles. Within this context, we expect our Rector to build into their calendar a weekly rest day and to take their full quota of annual holiday.

b) The area

Our area is a great place in which to live, work and play. Despite its coastal location in northeast Norfolk, it's readily accessible and hosts or is in easy striking distance of a wide range of services and recreational and cultural activities. The following medley of facts and descriptives will give an insight into what you can expect to find here.

Award-winning beach • pre-school, infant and junior schools in Mundesley, academy high schools in Cromer and North Walsham with local transport, and sixth-form college in North Walsham • **5 miles to Waitrose, Sainsbury's and Lidl** • regular bus services to North Walsham and Norwich, Cromer and the north Norfolk coast • **numerous off-road foot and cycle paths including the Norfolk Coast Path and Paston Way** • medical centre and pharmacy • **places to meet people and spaces to lose yourself** • 45 minutes to Norwich Airport with regular flights to Amsterdam and Aberdeen and holiday charter flights to a wide range of destinations • **independent greengrocers, butchers, deli and fish-shop, boutique and home accessories shop, neighbourhood stores** • country pubs and hotels • **cafés and coffee bar** • 5 miles to North Walsham railway station with services to Norwich and regular onward direct links to London in under 2 hours, Cambridge and Stansted Airport, Peterborough, Sheffield, Manchester and Liverpool • **long-established families and relative newcomers** • staying tourists and day-trippers • **art and crafts** • medieval and contemporary Norwich just 45 minutes away with retail, theatre, sports and leisure, restaurants, bars and clubs, the University of East Anglia and an iconic cathedral • **and of course, fish and chips!**

The Rectory



The Rectory is located in Mundesley on a quiet road. It is within easy walking distance of the Church, the Community Rooms, the village centre and the beach.

The house is detached with an internal floor area of 186 m², is centrally heated and double glazed and comprises: Kitchen, utility, dining room, lounge, study/office, ground-floor washroom, four bedrooms with en-suite to the master, and a family bathroom with shower.

Outside there is an attached garage, off-road visitor parking, and a low-maintenance garden.

Part 3 - Trunch Group churches



All Saints, Mundesley

Mundesley has a population of around 4,000 people and boasts to be one of Norfolk's best kept villages. Surrounded by the beautiful Norfolk countryside, the beaches and coastal walks are stunning, making the village a very popular holiday destination which brings many tourists each year. Close to the sea front you will find a popular mini golf, a large recreational park great for holding community events, a skate park for young people and an outdoor gym. A bit further afield, set over rolling hillside, we have a nine-hole golf course.

All Saints church sits on the edge of the village over-looking the North Sea on the very top of the cliff. A place of historical interest, there has been a church on this site since 1086. The church itself is surrounded by a well-kept churchyard which is tended by our great team of volunteers.

In the main church building we hold several regular services including holy communion every Wednesday, a traditional monthly Sunday service, a well-supported Easter sunrise service on the cliff top and a carol service at Christmas.

We are blessed to still have multiple independent shops, cafés and a hotel, as well as the staples of a post office, a chemist and three convenience stores. The village also has its own Coastwatch station, a charitably funded inshore lifeboat and seasonal RNLI beach lifeguards all helping to keep our shores and visitors safe.

Café Church at Mundesley

Café Church is one of our success stories and one of God's biggest blessings to us. With the help of our authorised worship assistants and gifted worship band we have the largest congregation in the Group.

Café Church meets every Sunday at 11am during term time in the church community rooms. This is a relaxed and informal family church service of vibrant contemporary worship, relevant teaching and meaningful prayer. We believe that as a church family we need to learn, pray and worship together. There is always a warm welcome and, thanks to the hospitably team, coffee and cake are served throughout the morning.

As a congregation we understand that what many people are looking for is somewhere they feel they belong, a place where they are accepted and loved unconditionally. We believe it is essential to engage with the local community and we are blessed to have the space provided by our community rooms from which to carry out our outreach programmes with our group of fantastic volunteers.

We are now running many groups and outreach projects for people who live locally. All of our groups and events are open to everyone - it is our vision that all are made to feel welcome. As a result of our openness, we have found that God has used us to help meet the needs of many people who are struggling, whether due to financial difficulties, loneliness and isolation or something else entirely. Everyone involved feels extremely privileged to be part of the mission that has been started here.



The groups and projects we run so far include:

Warm Hub Group: a weekly hub group on Tuesdays for anyone who would like to come and enjoy a hot two-course meal.

Lunch club: a monthly informal meal for the community.

Pop-up Cafe: this happens throughout the summer for locals and tourists alike.

Community Larder: a very popular event which was launched a few years ago by members from our Café Church. With the help of donations from our local Waitrose and Morrisons supermarkets we open our community larder every Friday morning. Alongside this we run a café where drinks, cakes and bacon rolls are available. The larder has become an amazing place and many people have started to attend Café Church regularly and openly acknowledge that it has been life-changing for them.

The Alpha Course: excitingly, 18 people attended the most recent Alpha group and we are enthusiastic about planning for the next course.

Café Connect: programmes of sessions which promote opportunities to discuss, probe and challenge, digging deeper into the Bible with fellowship... and more coffee and cake!

St Botolph's, Trunch (PCC incorporates Swafield and Bradfield)



The total population of the parish is almost 1000, a large proportion of whom are retired. The village is situated three miles north of North Walsham and two miles from the coast at Mundesley.

Many social activities happen in the village, organised by the Village Hall, clubs & projects that are sponsored by the Trunch Village Society, the Parish Council and of course the Trunch PCC.

PCC activities include regular church services (at least one per week), the annual crib service (attendance of over 100 in 2023), and an outdoor Carol Service with hot soup organised with the Methodist Church (attendance of around 80 in 2023). Pursuing our strategy to put St Botolph's at the heart of the community, we organise a Candlelit Christmas Concert (attendance 109) as part of the Trunch Concerts annual programme of regular plays and concerts, now in its 27th year, and the Swafield & Trunch Community Cinema held in St Botolph's in winter and spring and in St Nicholas Swafield in the summer and autumn, both of which will shortly become NT Live venues.

The PCC have also run fund raising activities for Ukraine and have started hosting social events for local Ukrainian refugees, including Orthodox Services.

In partnership with the Trustees of Swafield Village Hall the PCC runs the annual Trunch, Swafield & Bradfield village fête, as summarised in the Swafield section on p14.

St Botolph's Church dates from the 14th-century and is Grade-1 listed. It is famous for both its carved and painted wood font canopy and its rood screen featuring lower panels with paintings of the twelve Apostles, a cornice including a Latin inscription, and above six arches filled with tracery. Only four such canopies still exist in England. St Botolph's also features a hammerbeam roof with carved angels, as well as medieval misericords under the seats in the chancel. Another medieval survival is the rood screen depicting 11 disciples and St Paul (their faces were scratched out during the Reformation). Lord Nelson's daughter is said to have been married in the church.

St Botolph's has kitchen and toilet facilities, an electric projection screen, atmospheric LED lighting for social events and a free WiFi hotspot for use by villagers.

St Nicholas, Swafield



The total population of the parish is approximately 315, a large proportion of whom are retired. The village is situated 2.5 miles north of North Walsham and 2.5 miles from the coast at Mundesley.

Regular social activities take place in the village, organised by the Village Hall Committee.

PCC activities include quarterly church services and events that are part of the Trunch Concerts annual programme of regular plays & concerts, now in its 27th year. The Swafield & Trunch Community Cinema organised with Swafield Village Hall is also held in St Nicholas during summer and autumn.

In partnership with the Trustees of Swafield Village Hall the PCC also run the annual Trunch, Swafield & Bradfield village fete, which regularly attracts over 700 attendees. Additional fund-raising activities include two National Garden Scheme open days held at Swafield Hall. The proceeds from the fete and the open days go towards the maintenance and work of the churches in Trunch, Swafield & Bradfield.

The parish church of Saint Nicholas stands in a commanding position on high ground north of the village and is Grade II* listed. Inside the church the base of the chancel screen can still be seen. The base is painted red, green and gold and was decorated by a 15th-century artist. Roses and leaves have been carved in the tracery of the panels, on which there are paintings of the eight apostles. The interior of the roof is decorated bosses. Some of them feature Tudor roses, another a lion, and others have faces on them. One face is of Christ, with the five-pointed beard. Another face is surrounded by a crown of thorns, in the rope style of the 15th century. A third face is surrounded by sun rays and represents Christ in glory.

St Nicholas is a Chapel of Ease and currently has no kitchen or toilet facilities, but does have an electric projection screen for showing films in the summer and autumn. A consultation with the village has been conducted and planning is already underway to apply for grants to install a kitchen, toilet, solar panels, a meeting room and heating. When completed the activities of the Village Hall will be relocated to St Nicholas.

St Giles, Bradfield



St Giles church is a Grade 2* listed building set among fields in the village of Bradfield. The village has a population of approximately 100 and there are very few children. Bradfield shares a Parish Council with Swafield. There are no village amenities but there is a very thriving and well-known Cricket Club. There is a small caravan site behind the Hall with a few holiday lets.

The church has many interesting features, the chief of which is a Doom painting of Christ in judgement, above the chancel arch. It is unique in Norfolk and recently underwent restoration.

The church is surrounded by a large churchyard and burial ground. There are two Conservation areas within it, and in the Spring, it is covered in snowdrops.

The fabric of the church is in quite good order, as several works have been carried out in the recent past, including the reordering of the tower and the addition of a parapet and repairs to the silence chamber floor. Also, the nave roof and the roof of the small adjoining room on the north east corner have been retiled and improvements made to the drainage system.

Approximately 10 years ago St Giles became a Chapel of Ease but continued to have weekly services. We were joined with St Botolph Trunch and St. Nicholas Swafield to form one parish. However, our numbers reduced to a congregation of three, and we began to attend St Botolph's. We now have three services during the summer months and the occasional wedding or funeral.

So many of our visitors comment on the peacefulness and lovely atmosphere of the church, so that we are encouraged to think of better ways to use it for the benefit of our wider community. The following is an example of the kind of thing we would like to see happen on a regular basis. In 2021 the local school made a study of the Doom painting and the legend of St Giles. They then produced a beautiful exhibition of their work, which was on display all summer, and some aspects still remain. They also helped to write the church trail. One visitor was so moved as to donate a seat, which is now located in the churchyard by the porch. Although not used for regular worship now, we are so pleased that St. Giles offers people a place of tranquillity and a feeling of the love that has been felt down the years.

St Peter and St Paul's, Knapton



Knapton is a Church of England Parish. The Church is Grade 1 listed. It is built of Norfolk flint with a leaded roof. The tower, unusually, is off set to the Northwest.

The tower and chancel are 14th century; the nave was re-modelled in the 15th century. The chancel has a priest's door with a very rare small porch. The building's principal glory is its magnificent double hammerbeam roof, displaying inside, on its various parts, no less than 138 subtly painted angels with spread wings. This has been described as 'probably the handsomest parish church roof in the country'.

In December 2013 St Peter and St Paul's Knapton was listed in "100 Church Treasures" by the Church Treasurers Appeal. The large weathervane on the tower was designed by the artist John Sell Cotman when staying nearby. The church is the focal point for the village, standing at the highest elevation. It is the largest, oldest, and most important building in the locality and is much loved as the place of village baptisms, marriages, and funerals over the centuries.

Knapton is a small, rather dispersed, village with a population of some 330 people plus a number of holiday homes. The new housing development added to the number of younger people and children in the village. There is no shop or public house but the village hall holds a variety of events on a regular basis weekly, fortnightly and monthly. The PCC is working with the Parish Council to enable the church to be used as a community space.

This worked very well for the Diamond Jubilee when the whole village came together, to party, dance and light the Village Beacon which was sited in the old side of the churchyard for posterity.

Our annual Village Carol Service is the highlight of the year with over 80 in the congregation. Our challenge is to grow our regular congregation, and support for the church from our village community.

From 2014 to 2018 the church had major renovations with the assistance of The Heritage Lottery Fund and other organisations including the National Churches Trust and Norfolk Churches Trust. The Tower was completely refurbished and the south nave roof was re-leaded. The bonus was that toilet and kitchen facilities were also installed. A total of £365,000 was spent on the project making the church ready for another 1,000 years.

St Margaret's, Paston

Paston is the easternmost parish in the Lynn Archdeaconry. It runs inland from the coast, abutting Mundesley and Knapton, and has a dispersed settlement pattern.

The population is around 265 and land use is almost entirely agricultural with the exception of the western sector of the Bacton Gas Terminal which processes up to 40% of UK natural gas, and Mundesley Holiday Village which has recently been transformed from a typical 'Hi-de-Hi' style holiday camp into a contemporary lodge park overlooking the coastal cliffs and Stow Windmill, a restored flour mill and scenic landmark.



Paston has no service facilities although there is a very well-equipped children's play area which has been provided through community fund-raising. Paston's main claim to fame is having been home to the Paston Family who became known internationally for the Paston Letters, a surviving collection of fifteenth century correspondence which provided detailed insight into social and business life at the time.

St Margaret's church is situated on the edge of the village and is Grade-1 listed with a thatched nave roof. It contains nationally important medieval wall paintings and a range of historic links to the Paston Family heritage. There is a very small local congregation and others involved with the church live in neighbouring parishes. As a place of worship, St Margaret's now functions as host to Trunch Group services which are supplemented by occasional festive events, with public worship being held in total about six times a year.

The PCC has recognised that the church is not viable solely as a place of worship and has been working over the past few years to create a space which can be used for a variety of purposes. The Paston Community Project has been crafted around four phases:

- Structural and drainage repairs and renewal, completed in 2014
- Restoration and conservation of the wall paintings, completed in 2021
- Reconfiguration and repurposing of the nave, completed in July 2023
- Wildlife conservation and the promotion of sustainable recreation, ongoing

Works to date have delivered a building which is structurally sound and weathertight, a large open space following the removal of over half of the pews, the relocation of the font and the re-laying of the stone floor, and the provision of a kitchen servery and accessible WC and washroom. The wildlife conservation and sustainability project in the churchyard is currently underway and will include the creation of a wildflower zone to the south of the church, a nature trail along a marked path running through the churchyard, hedge regeneration and new planting, and the promotion of walking and cycling linked to the Norfolk Coast Path and the Paston Way footpath, both of which pass through and alongside the churchyard, and the District Council's deep History Coast trail which spans the northeast Norfolk coastline passing through Paston village. The church now has the potential to act as a visitor destination, a multi-purpose community facility, a space for exhibition and events, and a continuing place of worship. The challenge ahead is to make all of this work, to sustain both the structural and spiritual integrity of the building.

All Saints, Gimingham



Gimingham is an attractive village, about a mile inland from the coast. It is a typical linear village, running along a street with All Saints' Church half way between the two main areas of habitation.

The village population is relatively static at about 500. The resident worshipping community has declined gradually over the past 30 years from around 20 to the present number of 4, only 1 of whom actually lives in the village and is under the age of 79 years! Currently we have about 6 services in the year. So, we have a survival problem!

On the positive side... the Christingle service on Christmas Eve attracts a regular attendance of about 200, drawn locally and from other churches in our community. We hold more wedding services than any other church in the Group and well-attended funeral services too. Our Flower and Christmas Tree Festivals are very popular and are also valuable fund-raisers.

So, All Saints' Church is obviously a valued and much-loved part of our village, even though, in common with national statistical evidence, most people no longer wish to attend Sunday services.

Our challenge, therefore, is to channel this goodwill into regular financial support for the Church. We intend to do this by approaching villagers to explain the situation and inviting them to consider offering a small regular donation towards church upkeep, via the Parish Giving Scheme.

If this approach is successful, we hope that, in time, it will translate into a more community-based interest in the upkeep and future use of the church building at least for the next century.

We feel that doing nothing about our situation is no longer an option for the long-term survival of Gimingham Church.

Part 4 – And finally...a few statistics and some practical information

Electoral roll numbers for 2023

Parish	Number on the electoral roll 2023
Gimingham	6
Knapton	13
Mundesley	64
Paston	6
Trunch incorporating Bradfield and Swafield	34

Service arrangements and attendance

The following table is designed to illustrate the number and range of services taking place across the Group and the typical levels of attendance. The statistics are for the 2023 calendar year and reflect the core pattern of one main Sunday Holy Communion service being held in a different church each week with a focus on Mundesley, Trunch and Knapton and less frequently in the other churches, together with a weekly Wednesday Holy Communion at Mundesley and various ad hoc and festive services.

Service	Number in 2023	Average attendance
Sunday HC main service	52	29
Café Church	37	55
Wednesday HC	52	10
Baptism	7	
Marriage	8	
Funeral	20	

During 2023, we have been experimenting with some additional services in the regular schedule. The following service rotas give an overview of worshipping activity across the Group in January and September 2023

a) January 2023

January 2023	Service
1st January 2023	10am Holy Communion MUNDESLEY
8th January 2023	10am Holy Communion GIMINGHAM 11am Café Church Mundesley Community Rooms
15th January 2023	10am Holy Communion KNAPTON 11am Café Church Mundesley Community Rooms
22nd January 2023	10am Holy Communion MUNDESLEY 11am Café Church Mundesley Community Rooms
29th January 2023	10am Holy Communion TRUNCH 11am Café Church Mundesley Community Rooms
Every Wednesday	10am Holy Communion Mundesley Community Rooms

b) September 2023

September 2023	Service
3rd September	10am Holy Communion MUNDESLEY
Wed 6th Sept	10am Holy Communion MUNDESLEY
10th September	8am Holy Communion (BCP) MUNDESLEY 10am Holy Communion TRUNCH 11am Café Church Mundesley Community Rooms
Wed 13th Sept	10am Holy Communion MUNDESLEY
17th September	10am Holy Communion KNAPTON 11am Café Church Mundesley Community Rooms 7pm Taizé service PASTON
Wed 20th Sept	10am Holy Communion MUNDESLEY
24th September	8am Holy Communion (BCP) MUNDESLEY 10am Holy Communion PASTON 10am Morning Worship / Harvest Festival - TRUNCH 11am Café Church Mundesley Community Rooms
Wed 27th Sept	10am Holy Communion MUNDESLEY

Thank you!



Thank you very much for reading through this document – we hope you have found it interesting and that it has whetted your appetite sufficiently to consider the role further.

We are very much looking forward to welcoming our new Rector to this beautiful benefice. Our prayer is for someone who is able to embrace the diversity of our community and lead all of our many different services and activities, building on what has been achieved to date and driving them forward.

We hope that you will share in our vision for outreach and have a passion for building our congregations both in number and spiritual wellbeing. You will want to support us to develop and encourage our congregations to discover and use the gifts God has given them for the benefit of the church and for our community.

Trunch Group

January 2024