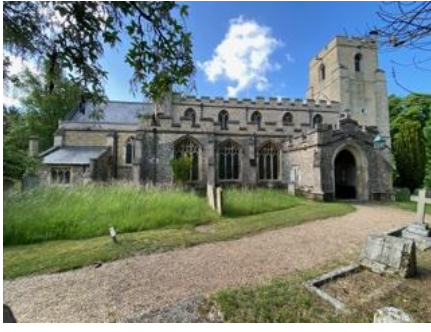


# The Benefice of Harston, Hauxton and Newton Diocese of Ely Granta Deanery South Cambridgeshire



Harston

Hauxton



Vicarage  
(location Harston)



Newton

## **Could you be the person to lead us forward?**

### **In order to turn our vision into action over the next five years**

we are looking for a Vicar who will

- build a ministry team to extend the scope of our mission
- nurture us in the faith, valuing our traditions while guiding us in new possibilities
- grow a visible ministry, with pastoral care for and beyond our congregations, including reaching out to new areas of housing

#### **To do this, we need a Vicar who is**

- sustained by and continuing to grow in the Christian faith
- friendly and outgoing with people of all ages and backgrounds
- prayerful in leading services and spiritually stimulating in preaching
- flexible, organised and communicative about the use of time
- experienced in managing teams as a listener and a leader
- positive, encouraging and energetic in working with us to pursue our vision

#### **We can offer our Vicar**

- welcoming and supportive congregations
- commitment to working together as a benefice
- a spacious and attractive vicarage in a good location near Cambridge
- loved and well-maintained churches
- willing and capable volunteers who cooperate with each other
- readiness to extend administrative support as needed

## Introducing our benefice

Harston, Hauxton and Newton form a cluster of adjoining parishes on the south side of Cambridge, with a total population of around 3500.

Our villages are popular and convenient places to live. Unemployment is low and levels of education are high. The population is mainly white British but with a diversity of international families. With the M11 nearby, we are just a few miles from the centre of Cambridge. The University, Addenbrooke's Hospital and Biomedical Campus, and the Science Parks are all within easy reach. There is a speedy train service to London from nearby stations. While being well connected to centres of work, our villages remain rural in character, surrounded by trees and with ready access to footpaths and open countryside.

Our villages have a strong sense of community, and some families have lived in the area for generations. The three churches in our benefice are historic buildings that are highly valued by churchgoers and non-churchgoers alike.

### The Vicarage

The vicarage is adjacent to the church in Harston, with direct access to the churchyard. Built in 1970, it is in good decorative order. Upstairs, there are five bedrooms and two bathrooms. The ground floor has a kitchen, study, dining room and a light and spacious living room overlooking an attractive garden bordered by the river. The house has oil-fired central-heating and a solid-fuel fire in the living room. There is plenty of parking space on the drive.

Responsibilities for the maintenance of the Vicarage and garden can be found in the Ely Diocese 'Guide to Living in a Parsonage House'.



The PCC expects to meet the usual reasonable expenses of the clergy, and will, of course, be happy to discuss appropriate guidelines.

## **Organisation**

We have seen growth in recent years in the range of services and other activities across the benefice and there is ambition and enthusiasm to see this continue. In addition, there have been changes in our villages, notably in Hauxton where the population has recently doubled in size with an influx of young families, and new provision for older people. Refurbishment of the church in Harston has brought increased possibilities for community use and for events including concerts, exhibitions and discussions.

All these developments offer both challenge and opportunity. We are keenly aware that by doing more we are increasingly straining our human resources, of clergy and volunteers, and that growth needs to be underpinned by additional resource.

Our last two ministers have worked on a House for Duty basis. While they have been able to draw informally on the services of other clergy, they have not had the support of a defined team ministry. We are blessed to have the services of retired clergy on an informal basis, but we have not in recent years had the regular support of an associate priest, a curate or a licensed lay minister. We would like to work with the Deanery and the Diocese to remedy this.

We have committed volunteers in all our churches. We have made advances in communicating across and beyond our congregations with a well-maintained and much-visited website [hxn.church](http://hxn.church), and a weekly newsletter with a circulation of 80. Our churches are committed to working more closely together. We have streamlined our administrative systems with a shared calendar and services plan, and have adopted policies for the whole benefice. Churchwardens from all three churches meet regularly with the Vicar to plan ahead, and we have begun to draw the PCCs more closely together with an annual shared PCC meeting.

Our churches consistently pay their Ministry Share in full. The total for the benefice in 2021 was £26,043.

## **Worship and ministry**

We currently share a pattern of fortnightly services in each church with a range of additional services for festivals and special occasions. We are open to reviewing this arrangement with a new Vicar, and would welcome the greater flexibility that could be offered by a team ministry.

Other services and activities with a spiritual purpose have included a weekly Compline, Lent groups, daily services in Holy Week, a discipleship group, and 'coffee and chat' gatherings. Church members sometimes attend services across the benefice and are welcomed in all our churches. Music is important to us and we have a director of music for the benefice. Talented organists, a dedicated music group, and an occasional choir support worship across the benefice.

We value the breadth of Christian experience offered within the Church of England. Our congregations appreciate the liturgy and the spiritual nourishment offered by a prayerful atmosphere. We appreciate preaching that stimulates thinking and informs our lives. We embrace traditional patterns of worship but are open to ideas for enriching and deepening our spiritual lives.

A small but growing number of families attend services and other events. Our current Vicar has initiated activities such as fortnightly Sunday afternoon 'Treasure Hunters' and summer 'Pop-up Play' activities, which are tailored to the needs of young children. This is very much an area for potential growth, so that the growing circle of those with occasional contact with our churches can be drawn more closely into our church life.

In all three parishes, church members make an active contribution to the life of the village and its residents. We think it important that our churches are seen as being there for everyone, whether regular churchgoers or not.

### **Looking to the future**

Our most recent Vicar looked after the three parishes while living in the Vicarage in Harston on the basis of House for Duty, initially as an associate priest and then as priest-in-charge. This pattern is now changing so that our Vicar will be the incumbent with full ministry responsibility for our three parishes. We want to ensure an arrangement, whether House for Duty or part-time stipendiary, that is structured to enable growth and development across the benefice. We are looking for a Vicar with the confidence and experience to think strategically about the future, and to build up a ministry team, as well as harnessing the efforts of willing and able volunteers in each of our three parishes.

As part of the current deanery development planning process, our PCCs have drawn up a mission plan outlining our priorities and vision for the future. This can be found on our website ([hnn.church](http://hnn.church)). We want a Vicar with energy and organisational ability to work with us in developing and implementing our vision. We value spiritual depth and broad churchmanship, pastoral aptitude and active engagement in village life. We are open to hearing fresh ideas and need enthusiastic and positive leadership to take us forward.

Harston, the largest of our three villages, has the biggest congregation and facilities for an expanding range of activities. We are keen that our church at Harston, with its new resources, should be available to everyone across the benefice. Hauxton has a growing population and opportunities for engaging with children and families, but requires added capacity to take advantage of this potential for growth. Newton is stable with a small but strongly attached congregation.

We need our Vicar to be a visible presence in our communities, and to demonstrate that our churches are there for everyone. We are committed to working together, led by our new Vicar, to capitalise on Harston's resources,

to strengthen Hauxton and to extend the pastoral care offered to and beyond our congregations, including active outreach to new areas of housing, particularly in Hauxton. Our aim is to ensure that all three churches of our benefice are in a healthy and sustainable condition in five years' time.

We recognise the need to work closely together as a benefice so that we do not duplicate effort. We hope that our Vicar will encourage people to value their own church building, while also moving happily between our churches and joining groups and activities that serve the benefice. We anticipate the need to provide additional administrative support as we extend the scope of our ministry and draw our PCCs more closely together. We will work with our new Vicar to identify what is needed in this respect.

Many in our congregations have links with Cambridge and the life of the university. We hope that our Vicar would enjoy fostering links, for example, with college chaplaincies and the theological colleges, to enlarge our perspective and to draw in support for ministry across the benefice.

We welcome the ministry of men and women priests, whatever their age or family circumstances. We appreciate that a new Vicar will bring individual strengths, perspective and experience to the role and we look forward to exploring the future together.

## All Saints' Harston



### Our community

Harston has a population of about 1,900 adults and children. The church is in the oldest part of the village. Along the A10, which forms the village high street, there is a village hall, a general store and post office, and a pub restaurant. Set back from this main road we have a large recreation ground with children's play facilities, a community apple orchard and a network of country footpaths much enjoyed by walkers and dogs.

A modern Health Centre on Church Street includes a dispensing pharmacy. Harston and Newton are served by a county primary school, located in Harston, which has a pre-school for children between two and four. Pupils from the school regularly visit the church, and the Vicar is invited to take assemblies. There is friendly co-operation between the church and the Baptist Chapel, founded in 1768, which also provides a location for Harston's well-used Food Hub. A cycle and pedestrian path through the village continues into Cambridge,

Church members are actively involved alongside others in a wide range of village activities including the Harston Residents' Group, a lunch club for older residents and regular coffee mornings. Harston's long history is excellently documented on the website [harstonhistory.org.uk](http://harstonhistory.org.uk).

### Our Church

The building, Grade 2\* listed, dates largely from the 15<sup>th</sup> century and can seat around 120. In recent years the chancel roof, external masonry and bell tower have been extensively restored. An annexe has been built with a modern disabled toilet and kitchen servery. In the last two years, with the help of a successful fundraising campaign amongst our congregation during the pandemic, we have been able to refurbish the church with a new Ancaster stone floor and replace poor quality pews with stackable wooden seating. Our catering facilities, versatile space and flexible seating are generating wider community use, as well as providing a congenial meeting place for our congregation and for the benefice.

The church is opened every day to provide a welcome to visitors, fulfilling our belief that the church should be available for everyone, whether for worship, prayer, reflection or historical interest.

The church has a fine pipe organ. The heating system is in good order, and can be remotely controlled. We have wifi, and a card reader for donations. A new sound system is being planned. The latest Quinquennial survey in October 2021 judged the church to be in generally good condition, and the PCC is keeping priorities for future restoration work under review.

The church is surrounded by an attractive, peaceful churchyard which is bordered by the River Rhee. Gravel pathways, lit at night, lead to the church door. The churchyard is closed for burials but has a garden of remembrance for the burial of ashes. It is regularly maintained, in an eco-friendly way.

### **Our congregation and worship**

Our Holy Communion services, usually twice monthly, follow Common Worship Order One and are part-sung to a modern setting, with hymns from The New English Hymnal. Our worship is enriched musically by our highly-skilled organist and a music group who sing on special occasions.

Churchwardens and assistant churchwardens, sidespersons and vergers help to ensure that services run smoothly. Monthly rotas draw on contributions from members of the congregation in many roles. Refreshments are provided after services so that we can meet and share together and welcome newcomers.

We have 43 people on the electoral roll. Attendance at services on Sunday, gradually recovering post-pandemic, is usually between 20 and 35. Baptisms, weddings and funerals, and the pastoral care surrounding these occasions, have drawn many families, even if not regular attenders, into a stronger connection with the church. Special services, including, for example, Remembrance and a Christingle service on Christmas Eve, are usually very well attended.

There is space at the back of church for young children to play, and books and drawing materials are kept available.

### **Other activities**

The Friends of All Saints' Church (FoAS) was launched in September 2021 and now has around 50 members who donate in support of the historic building and its community use.

In recent months, making full use of the new flexible space, we have held an exhibition about the restoration; concerts by senior and junior brass bands, and by a traditional folk music group; four 'In Conversation' evenings with guests including Terry Waite; and an evening of poetry, prose and music on the theme of remembering. The church is used for music rehearsals and has also been hired by groups seeking a meeting space.



Groups visit on occasions to ring our bells.

Church members are active in supporting village events, and responding, with the Vicar, to community needs such as providing food for families in difficulty.

### **Finance and administration**

Our PCC meets every two months. The membership includes two churchwardens and two assistant churchwardens, one of whom is the Treasurer. We have a longstanding member with valuable expertise who deals with the church fabric and has headed the restoration projects. We are currently without a PCC Secretary, but the minutes of meetings are followed through to ensure timely action on decisions made.

The Parish Magazine, 'Village and Church News' appears every two months, and is delivered, free-of-charge, to every household in the parish. It includes sections for Harston and Hauxton Parish Churches and Harston Baptist Church, and includes a message from the Vicar.

Church finances are sound. Reserves in the General Fund are well in excess of the one year's running costs required by our Reserves Policy. We participate in the Parish Giving Scheme for regular giving, and take advantage of gift aid where possible. Our Restoration Fund is significantly enhanced by fundraising campaigns and the money raised by social events.

## All Saints' Harston



Flower Festival



East Window



Benefice music director



Concert rehearsal



The Annexe

# St Edmund's Hauxton



## Our community

Hauxton is a rural village surrounded by countryside with a population of around 1200. It has doubled in size in recent years with a major housing and independent-living development and has potential for further growth. The demographics of the village are changing with an increasing number of young families and increasing ethnic diversity.

A new village hall with café and meeting rooms opened in 2021 which, together with a recently upgraded sports ground, provides for a growing number of activities such as pilates, dance, tennis, football and cricket. The village has a primary school, pre-school and nursery, and a large modern playground and recreation area which draws families from neighbouring villages. A small convenience store and a hairdressers have opened in the new development and there is an organic food shop and a large area of allotments.

## Our church

Our delightful small church is in a prominent position in the centre of the expanded Hauxton, sitting between the old heart of the village and the new development of Hauxton Meadows. We celebrated 1050 years of worship in 2019 and the stone core dates from the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Whilst relatively humble, with only a nave, chancel, vestry and tower, it has a rich history and is Grade 1 listed. It features early Norman arches and its treasures include a unique fresco of Thomas à Becket, and two early sundials. The building is well maintained and is in generally very good repair. A ten-year restoration of the exterior and interior was completed recently. It has a seating capacity of 100.

The church is open every day. It is used by members of the community for quiet prayer and contemplation, and attracts visitors from far afield for its historic interest. The churchyard, which is still open for the burial of parishioners, is maintained by an external contractor on instruction from the PCC and with help from parishioners.

## Our congregation and worship

Average attendance at regular Sunday services from April 2021 to May 2022 was 26, of whom about half were from Hauxton and typically 3 were children.

The most recent Harvest, Remembrance and Carol Services had 42, 40 and 67 attendees respectively, with Christmas Day and Easter Sunday services being held at Harston. Pre-pandemic special services have included Songs of Praise, Christingle and Crib Service.

With the growth in the village over the last 5 years the church has welcomed some new members and there have been 3 baptisms of new children of the congregation. There are no regular attendees between the age of 5 and 30, despite the increasing number in the village. Electoral roll numbers have declined from a recent high of 26 in 2019 to the current 16. In total there have been 7 baptisms, 3 weddings and 15 funerals over the last 5 years.

Services are currently based on Common Worship and use Hymns Old & New. The congregation welcomes occasional variations in liturgy, structure, style and hymnal. We have an organ, played for every service by one of the benefice organists, and enjoy the contribution of the Music Group to services. Church members contribute as readers and sidespersons. We intend to restart coffee after Sunday services, following a pause due to the pandemic.

With church attendance remaining low despite the growth in the village, and in response to Ely2025, we have recently reviewed our Parish Development Action Plan. We want to build up the life of the church through our regular Sunday services and through benefice activities. Our core purpose is to provide spiritual sustenance for regular and new members of the congregation, both young and old. We believe there is an unmet spiritual and pastoral need in Hauxton Meadows and are keen to use the opportunity of a new ministry team for fresh engagement with the village's newest residents.

### **Other activities**

We contribute to benefice activities, such as Pop-Up Play, Treasure Hunters and Lent Group. The pandemic severely hindered our Hauxton activities; a folk music concert in June 2022 being our first event since 2019. The Friends of St Edmund's, a '100 Club' lottery, have a monthly coffee morning in the Hauxton Centre including their prize draw. Previous recent activities include an autumn fair, harvest picnic, open day with exhibition and tower tours, and a Salvation Army band concert.

The congregation and PCC have close ties with other village activities, the Parish Council and new Hauxton Centre. Engagement with the primary school remains limited since the pandemic but we are planning a joint Carol Service this year.

We are fortunate to be a highly visible presence in the centre of the expanded village with a building and church tradition rich in history and value, as a place of worship and of quiet contemplation. We are keen to see St Edmund's Church thrive, to meet the needs of our village and to generate a message of a thriving community of God in Hauxton and beyond. We are keen to ensure that the village are aware of and feel that it is *their* church and that those who may not wish to engage with a traditional Christian faith still feel welcome.

## **Finance and administration**

We have two churchwardens and the PCC of six meets quarterly, in addition to benefice meetings of churchwardens and PCCs. We are currently without a formal PCC Secretary and our resources are stretched but we share the responsibilities of roles between individuals and are taking steps to make administration more efficient.

We meet our Parish Share in full every year with careful management of limited funds, although there is a degree of fragility. Annual receipts are broadly similar to annual outgoings. Unrestricted reserves are limited at approximately two to three months outgoings, with modest restricted cash and endowment funds for specific fabric or maintenance needs.

The Friends provides funding for fabric repair, maintenance and cleaning. The Parish Council usually helps to fund grass cutting in the churchyard. Parishioners help with tasks such as flower arranging and churchyard maintenance.

The PCC contributes to the benefice website and weekly email newsletter. Church news is included in the Harston and Hauxton Church and Village magazine which is distributed to all residents.

## St Edmund's Hauxton



12th century Sundial to mark service times



South door



Music Group at a Baptism service



Fresco of St Thomas á Becket

## St Margaret's, Newton



### Our Community

Newton has 170 houses and a population of about 400, including 30-40 children. In recent years there has been an increase in the number of working age people, but there is a high proportion of retired people who have lived here for a long time. Plans for affordable housing are under consideration. Children attend primary and secondary schools in neighbouring villages or in Cambridge. Harston and Newton primary school is located in Harston.

There is no longer a shop or post office in the village but Harston or Whittlesford are just a few miles away. There is a limited bus service to Cambridge.

By the village green, with a children's play area, is the historic Queen's Head pub and the village hall with a sports and social club attached. The surrounding agricultural land has some light industry and technical companies with employees from outside the village. The village has a strong sense of community and organisations include WI, drama club, cricket club, lunch club and book club.

### Our Church

St. Margaret's Church is a Grade 2\* listed building that was consecrated in 1346. It is in good condition and there have been recent major works on the tower and north aisle. A sound system was installed in 2021. Both church and churchyard (still open for burial of parishioners), are well maintained.

### Our Congregation and Worship

Services of Holy Communion, evensong and morning prayer are held each month at St Margaret's. As the pandemic subsides and people feel safer, it is now anticipated that average congregation size will revert to a level in the mid-teens. At Christmas 2021 there were 17 at Holy Communion and 57 at the Carol Service.

Many who do not attend regular Sunday Services are active participants in the wider life of the church and its Christian fellowship. We see this as important aspect of our

church life and pastoral contribution.

The Newton Choir was formed 25 years ago to support the Christmas carol service. It continues to support services at Easter, Harvest and Christmas, as well as performances in some Holy Weeks, including Stainer's Crucifixion in 2021.

### **Other Activities**

Newton is a sociable, close-knit village and the church is integral to village life. Although we have a small average congregation we have 40 members of the 100Club and 80 attend the Harvest supper. Church members instigated and continue to cook for the Newton Lunch Club which meets monthly. During the pandemic when we could not hold a large Harvest supper, small permitted supper parties were held in individual houses to maintain fundraising.

### **Finance and Administration**

The PCC includes two churchwardens (one of whom is the treasurer). It usually meets four times a year. The finances are sound and Newton has managed to meet its Parish Share in full for the past 25 years. As well as the dividend from investment in the church Board of Finance Fund, the church benefits from the Parish Giving Scheme, financial support from Friends of St. Margaret's 100Club and the Harvest supper. A variety of fundraising events are held and are well supported by the village.



## St Margaret's Newton



St Margaret's Church interior



Carol Service and choir



Summer social evening

## **Benefice information**

### **Population**

Harston	1900
Hauxton	1200
Newton	400

### **Electoral Roll numbers 2022**

All Saints' Harston	43
St Edmund's Hauxton	16
St Margaret's Newton	27

### **Ministry Share 2021**

All Saints' Harston	£13,849
St Edmund's Hauxton	£5,685
St Margaret's Newton	£6,509

### **Current monthly pattern of services**

1st Sunday	Harston Holy Communion	10.00am
2nd Sunday	Newton Holy Communion	9.00am
	Hauxton Morning Prayer	10.30am
3rd Sunday	Harston Holy Communion	10.00am
	Newton Evening Prayer	6.00pm
4th Sunday	Newton Morning Prayer	9.00am
	Hauxton Holy Communion	10.30am
5th Sunday	Benefice Holy Communion	10.00am