

Diocese of Oxford & See of Ebbfleet

ASSISTANT PARISH PRIEST

(full-time stipendiary, incumbent status)

in Hanslope and Castlethorpe

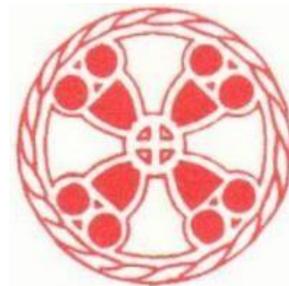
**Parish Profile
and Role Specification**



Contents

1. *The Bishop's Introduction*
2. *Parish Priest's Introduction*
3. *The Role*
4. *Our Life and Work*
5. *Our Vision*
6. *Our Churches and Our Shared Life*
7. *The Two Villages*
8. *Organisation and Finance*
9. *The Clergy House*
10. *The Deanery of Newport*
11. *The Diocese of Oxford*
12. *Appendix One*

Front cover image by Steven Howe (r)



1. The Bishop's Introduction



Photo Graham Howard

This new role is, then, a rare combination of an opportunity for pastoral leadership in a responsive and hope-filled parish alongside partners who are committed to the success of our venture. I commend it to you very warmly. I am very happy to talk if you would like to clarify any point of the profile and the mission of the new role – please contact me on 0118 948 1038 or via office@ebbsfleet.org.uk.

With every blessing,

+ Jonathan Ebbsfleet

Partnership is a word often used too easily, but it runs through this profile as through a stick of Blackpool rock. I am immensely encouraged by a partnership that is coming together—between myself, Fr Gary Ecclestone, the bishops and dioceses of Oxford and Coventry, and the PCCs of Hanslope and Castlethorpe—to support a new initiative. This profile concerns the last – and crucial – partner ... which could quite possibly be *you*. As so often in the most promising enterprises, there is an element of the unknown involved; but all the partners so far, not least the PCCs, are excited about the real benefits of the initiative for all involved: not least the clergy.

The job

The prospective appointment of Fr Gary as Ebbsfleet parish development mentor (as part of servingchrist.org.uk, supported and resourced by the Diocese of Coventry) has created an **exciting opportunity for a full-time, stipendiary, incumbent-status role as Assistant Parish Priest in both Hanslope and Castlethorpe** (north of Milton Keynes, next to the M1). If you're just completing your curacy, and looking for a parish where significant day-to-day pastoral responsibility and leadership opportunities, in a busy community-based Catholic-tradition parish, are combined with collegiality with other clergy; *or* your retirement is in sight and you have the skills and aptitudes to take a lead in a team context for five years; *or* if you are simply attracted by the post and its setting! we hope you will apply.

The parishes

So much of this proposal is testimony to the qualities of parish life in Hanslope and Castlethorpe:

- outward-looking, daring and confidently part of their local communities
- faithful to the Catholic tradition of the Church, and keen to learn and grow as Christian disciples
- prayerful and serious about their worship and mutual care
- aware of the needs of different age-groups in the church, but committed to their life together as an extended family.

2. Parish Priest's Introduction

The villages of Hanslope & Castlethorpe and a number of smaller outlying hamlets make up a benefice of currently some 3,350 souls. They lie on the northernmost edge of Buckinghamshire and much of the boundary is with Northamptonshire and the Diocese of Peterborough. We are nearly mid-way between Milton Keynes and Northampton and within very easy reach of the M1, A5 and A45 and local and intercity rail services from Milton Keynes Central and Wolverton, between Liverpool, North Wales, the Midlands and Euston, London being three quarters of an hour by train and Birmingham New Street from 50 minutes.

The two churches are both eucharistically focused, maintaining a moderate traditional catholic worshipping tradition and have been under the extended episcopal care of successive Bishops of Ebbsfleet for around twenty years. I came to be Parish Priest here in 2003 during that time the membership has grown steadily from 79 to the current 244 with worshipping numbers usually being at or above 100 on Sundays and a good spread of ages represented.

The villages of Hanslope & Castlethorpe have been linked ecclesiastically since the beginning of the parochial system. The only pastoral reorganization saw Castlethorpe & Hanslope become Hanslope & Castlethorpe in 1382 and it is possible that the current pastoral re-organisation within the deanery won't change the status quo, not least as the population continues to grow and is projected to reach 4,400 over the next few years. Two years ago I also became Area Dean and now I have been appointed to serve Bishop Jonathan as his Parish Development Mentor, supporting worshipping communities across his area in growing healthy churches. I am being seconded from my current role for a period of five years and this new appointment is being made for a period of five years also.

This post is a tremendous opportunity for someone. I have had nearly seventeen very happy years here having arrived as a first time incumbent and was appointed at the age of twenty-nine. The church communities are outward looking, faithful and keen to learn and grow, and be deepened in their spirituality and they are good fun too and there's lots going on. For someone fresh out of a curacy, or someone looking for a new challenge, this would provide an encouraging and supportive place to move onto. It is an incumbent status post, for whilst I am remaining as Parish Priest I am clear that the Ebbsfleet post and my role as Area Dean will be keeping me plenty busy enough and I will be wanting to support you in finding your feet and taking the lead.

I hope you enjoy reading about life here, both in church and in the wider community, this document is the work of twenty-five contributors, in itself indicative of parish life here. If you would like to know more, then please do contact me or Bishop Jonathan. I can be contacted on 01908 337936, by email at fr.gary@btinternet.com or via Facebook

Fr Gary Ecclestone SSC

Advertising: from January 2nd
Application Deadline: January 20th at 12 noon
Interviews: Monday 3rd February



3. The Role

Fr Gary is being seconded by Bishop Jonathan to work as his Parish Development Mentor for the next five years. He will continue to serve as Parish Priest and Area Dean but much of his parish role will be delegated to the new Assistant Parish Priest who, for the five year term of this post, will become the main and most visible face of the Church in the two communities. Fr Gary will continue to chair Castlethorpe PCC at least until the conclusion of the current building redevelopment project, but will delegate Hanslope PCC and the management of the day to day running of the two churches and their ministry.

Fr Gary expects to lead public worship one Sunday a month and help in a small number of defined areas as agreed with the newly appointed colleague. He will remain in regular contact with the new Assistant Priest to support, advise and encourage, especially if the person appointed is moving into a post of responsibility from a curacy.

We seek a traditional Anglo-Catholic priest who:

- Is a member of the Society of the Holy Cross or affiliated to The Society of St Wilfred & St Hilda or willing to be so
- Is rooted in prayer and can encourage others, of all ages, in the pursuit of holiness
- Is fully committed to the sacramental life
- Has a passion for both teaching and living out the catholic faith as the Church of England has received it
- will plan and prepare diligently for public worship
- Is kind and caring
- Is naturally collaborative
- will be a visible presence across our communities and especially in the two village schools
- will visit people in their own homes
- will help us develop our vision and especially the opportunities we have through the occasional offices

We offer:

- a happy, welcoming and supportive church family of all ages
- talented lay people and the practical support and advice of two hugely experienced retired priests
- administrative support
- encouragement to maintain a sustainable ministry, including days off, holidays, retreats and opportunities for personal and professional learning and development
- financial support for retreats and ministerial development
- a modern 4-bedroom house
- good local schools and excellent healthcare
- friendly village communities
- excellent road and rail links



4. Our Life & Work

Mission and Outreach

Both churches are active participants in village life and seek to function as hubs for community activity. The church has a real commitment to wellbeing and St James' Health & Wellbeing Group runs a monthly Community Lunch, Healthy Walking Group, Teatime Treats at a local sheltered housing complex, Cancer Support Group and Carers' Group in association with the local surgery. Occasional series of talks or seminars on mental health issues are also offered.

Castlethorpe's building redevelopment will provide the church with basic facilities for the very first time. It too seeks to reach out in love and service to the community and hopes to develop a number of similar initiatives building on their successful monthly Coffee Morning.

Contact through marriage, baptism and funeral ministry is very important and is an area that could easily be developed to be a more effective vehicle for mission. Both churches host concerts and a series of fundraising events which bring the community together. The links with the two schools in the villages are very important and whilst neither is a Church School Fr Gary has been actively involved in school life including as serving as a school governor at Castlethorpe.

Our ministry to children has always been very important. We have thriving Under Fives ministry and attract 70 children each summer to our annual Holiday Club. Since 2005 we have taken young people to the annual Walsingham Youth Pilgrimage which is a key part of our ongoing youth ministry focused on our after-school group Inspire which meets on Fridays. All of this brings us into contact with many who are outside the Sunday Eucharistic community.

Both communities are growing. Hanslope now has around 3350 inhabitants. This figure will soon be increased as two new housing developments totaling 290 homes come on stream; other developments are set to follow. At least 1000 people will move here over the next few years. The PCC has a strategy in place to meet and greet new residents as they move into these new homes.

Leadership and working collaboratively

The priest appointed will be responsible for the day-to-day life and work of the benefice. He will chair Hanslope PCC from the outset and be a member of Castlethorpe PCC also. Both PCCs have committed Standing Committees who meet between meetings to ensure actions are being carried out, to discuss matters of interest and concern and to plan the agenda for the next meeting.

There are a number of sub-committees and Working Groups which meet to ensure that the day-to-day activity of the parish flourishes. There is no requirement for the clergy to attend them all! We are blessed here with talented lay people who are both motivated, committed and loyal.

Our two retired priests Fr Robin Carter and Fr Robert Nokes assist regularly on an agreed basis and are much loved. Fr Robin is recovering from surgery at present but hopes to return in due course to a pattern of offering one day a week plus Sunday duty. We also have a Lay Reader in the Diocese of Peterborough who is also a member of the congregation and whilst he is not yet authorised in this diocese, he assists generally in a variety of ways.

Attendance at Deanery Chapter, monthly, and Deanery Synod, two or three times a year is expected. The SSC Chapter also meets five or six times a year and attendance should be prioritised. There are three Ebbsfleet benefices in the borough of Milton Keynes and their clergy meet on an *ad hoc* basis for mutual fellowship and support.



Worship

The Mass is celebrated daily Tuesday-Friday across the two churches and on Sundays in each church. There is a real commitment to the seasons of the church year with very well-attended worship on all feast days -including the involvement of a good number of children and young people - and kept mainly on their correct liturgical date. Only the Patronal Festivals are routinely transferred to the nearest Sundays. There is a particular focus on Holy Week with well-attended worship each day including the Bishop of Ebbsfleet's regional Chrism Mass, usually at Lichfield.

Our worship is greatly enhanced by our Benefice Choir. On feast days the choir offers an anthem. On Sundays a choir member cantors at Castlethorpe and choir members lead the responsorial psalm at Hanslope and support the singing. In both churches there is a Mass setting, usually Dom Gregory Murray, in the green seasons. At the moment we have no Director of Music but are being supported by a team of local organists.

The Walsingham Cell also arranges occasional acts of worship on Sunday evenings and at other times including Benediction. There is an augmented worship pattern during Advent and Lent including public recitation of the Daily Office and Exposition on Fridays.



Photo P. Coleman



A Rosary Group meets monthly through the year at the vicarage and weekly in Lent and there are thirty minutes of shared silence each Monday at 5.00pm. These are predominantly lay-led.

There is an active healing ministry too with a team involved in leading a bi-monthly Mass for Wholeness & Healing and monthly healing ministries as part of Hanslope's 11.00am Sung Mass.

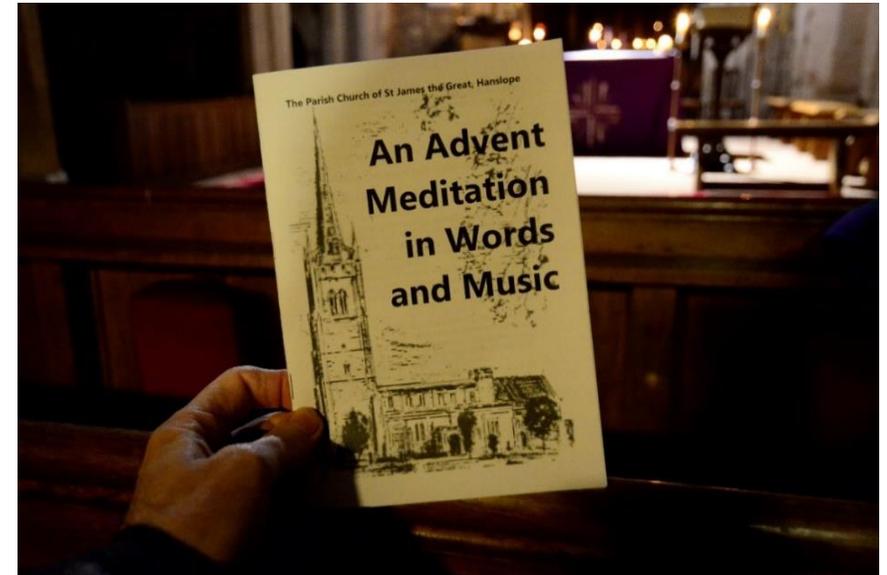


Photo P. Coleman



Photo P. Coleman

Pattern of Regular Worship

	Hanslope	Castlethorpe
Sunday	8.00am Low Mass (2 nd and 4 th) 11.00am Sung Mass	9.30am Sung Mass 6.00pm Evening Prayer (2 nd and 4 th)
Monday	5.00pm Following the Silence	
Tuesday		7.00pm Low Mass
Wednesday	5.30pm Low Mass	
Thursday	9.00am Morning Prayer 9.15am Low Mass & Coffee	
Friday	6.15pm Exposition (in Advent & Lent)	9.15am Low Mass & Coffee

In Lent the Daily Office is prayed corporately on weekdays at St James and is usually lay led.

Lay Formation

Teaching the faith has been at the heart of the growth strategy over the last sixteen years. In term time a range of courses are offered at basic, intermediate and more advanced levels. Since 2005 121 people have been confirmed, 56 adults and 65 young people at 17 Confirmation Masses.

Courses are led by a small team of committed lay people who work alongside the Parish Priest.

Growing churches are made up of people who themselves are growing spiritually and real effort is made to present a wide range of courses to suit a variety of interests as well as abilities.

Pastoral Care

The Pastoral Team is currently being augmented and will be re-authorised in January. It works with the clergy in the ministry of pastoral care and meets two or three times a year for ongoing training and support. The group is facilitated by two retired GPs.



Photo P. Coleman

Finance, Stewardship and Benefice Organisation

The two churches each have their own PCC with Standing Committees and sub committees and Working Groups as needed. Sub-committees often include non PCC members. There is a good relationship between the churches and the levels of mutual support for each other's events and activities are excellent.

As is so common across the church, finance remains difficult. Castlethorpe has paid its Parish Share in full and is working on stewardship of time, talents and finance to ensure a balanced budget going forwards whilst simultaneously needing to raise £103,000 for the redevelopment of the north aisle to provide running water, kitchen and toilet facilities, new electrics, lighting and heating. At St James, where the PCC has no unrestricted reserves and can only spend what it earns, it is currently working hard to return to paying the Share in full, which until last year it had always done. A stewardship campaign is run every other year. Finances are inevitably affected by parishioners moving away or dying. Church members readily offer help and support.



Photo Graham Howard

5. Our Vision

HANSLOPE

Hanslope's PCC has a well-developed rolling two-year programme of reviewing its mission priorities called 'Next Steps for Mission' under the three headings of Worship & Prayer, Learning & Teaching and Social Action.

Worship & Prayer Aims and Objectives:

- Raise the profile of prayer, both corporate and personal, by providing a variety of opportunities to deepen parish prayer life.
- Increase opportunities for midweek worship for families.
- Develop young people's involvement in the worship and support opportunities as they outgrow Sunday School
- Continue annual participation in the Archbishop of Canterbury's "Thy Kingdom Come" initiative running from Ascension Day to Pentecost.
- Increase involvement in the worship by lesson reading, singing, lay led intercessions, welcoming and serving of refreshments after services.
- Exploring opportunities for quiet days, retreats and pilgrimages, different ways of engaging with prayer, meditation and contemplation.
- Increase opportunities for the healing sacraments to be experienced.

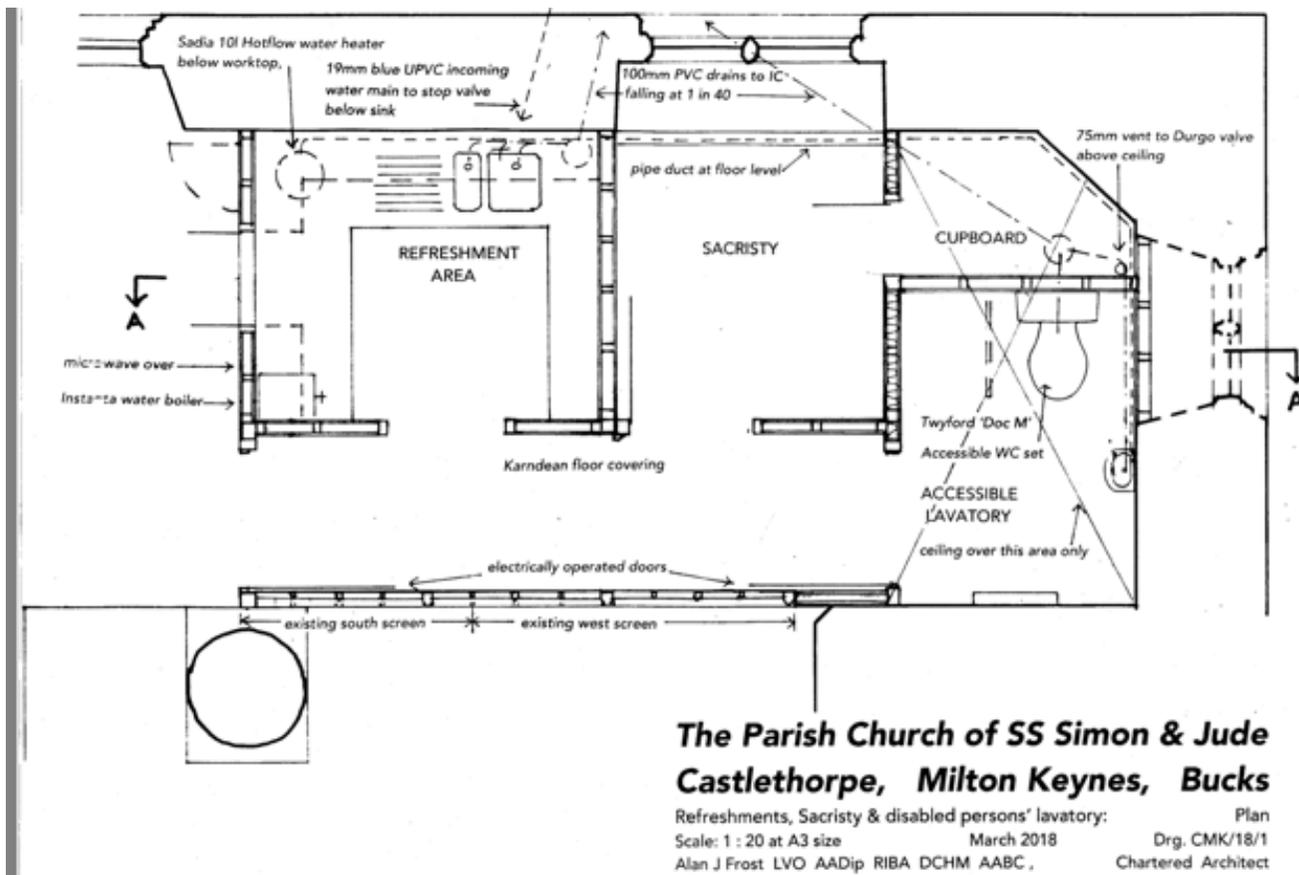
Learning & Teaching Aims and Objectives:

- Developing opportunities for adults to learn, grow and share their experiences particularly in a family context, and through our children's groups.
- Offering opportunities for primary school children to extend their religious learning, building on the success of the summer clubs.
- Developing our young people through opportunities to participate and grow as young leaders.
- Promoting "Explorer Courses" as a beginner's course, refresher and preparation for Confirmation.
- Focusing our help and guidance with Prayer and Bible readings for adults, personally and in groups, through Bible reading notes and web-based resources.
- Developing informal opportunities for people to gather to ask questions about the Christian faith.
- Establish a Christian book, cards and gift stall in church.
- Hosting teaching days that bring together different parishes.

Social Action Aims and Objectives:

- Expanding on social gatherings to engage new congregation members, couples who have been married and parents of those baptised.
- Embedding the Wellbeing Working Group, information and support for the local community (such as in mental health, parenting, mindfulness and general wellbeing).
- Further developing the Pastoral Care Team and its work through developing follow-up to baptisms, marriages and funerals.
- Strengthening our links with the Diocese of Ho.
- Extending our flower arrangements, church cleaning and churchyard help through further support.
- Embedding our Village Welcoming Scheme strategies, for example giving those who are new to the village church candles and information.
- Exploring new ways of closer working with other village organisations.

CASTLETHORPE



The much-needed work on the church building received a faculty in mid July 2019.

The works will be split into four phases. The first phase is to bring water into the building and in the same trench we will bring in a new electricity supply enabling us to remove the overhead supply crossing the churchyard. At the same time a treatment plant will be installed in the churchyard and the connections to the surface water drainage system made.

The second phase will involve rewiring the church to 2020 standards and installing a functioning heating system. This will also include the installation of many more discreetly located power points and a new LED lighting system.

The third phase will be the construction of the new tea/coffee making area, the rearrangements of the vestry and the installation of a WC, wash hand basin and baby changing area. This will be installed within the church building in the north east corner. The WC and kitchen will be wheelchair accessible via a newly constructed ramp and handrail.

The final phase will be the complete church redecoration

involving repairing damaged plaster, cleaning and repairing woodwork and redecorating the whole of the inside of the church. Essential repairs to the Tyrrill Monument adjacent to the high altar will also take place during this phase.

The PCC is embarking on a major fundraising effort to raise the monies required to carry out these essential works. We estimate that the total cost will be just over £100,000. Through previous Duck Races, donations and fundraising over the last three years we have already raised approximately £23,000.

Fundraising will be supported by our parishioners and a new support seeking programme aimed at the village itself and the wider community as well as the many grant-making bodies that exist to help such an enterprise.

Once the works are completed and we have a fully functioning building with modern facilities we can concentrate on using the building as a community facility for the village itself, the local school and the pre-school groups. In addition many more functions, religious or otherwise can take place within the building and we will encourage its wider use for these purposes.

It has taken many years to plan and obtain the necessary consents partly because the building is Grade 1 Listed and the PCC is looking forward to starting the project in 2020 with a completion date by the middle of 2021, please God.

6. Our Churches and Our Shared Life

Music

Both churches benefit from good access to music, whether in enhancing the liturgy every week or hosting concerts and recitals to support fundraising. Recent events have included a concert given by the choir of King's College Cambridge and recitals by local amateur ensembles such as Milton Keynes Brass. The choir, with all four voice parts, is drawn from across the Benefice. With the support of a local professional musician for rehearsals, it sings an anthem at each of the feasts and festivals of the year, as well as at special occasions such as Confirmation and at weddings.

The benefice is currently without a Director of Music but does have a stand-by team of organists.

With regards to hymn-singing, *Celebration Hymnal for Everyone* is used and there is a mix of old and new in the congregations' repertoire. Fr Gary intends to review the Revised English Hymnal as a potential additional hymn book. He selects hymns on a monthly basis, taking care to ensure that they reflect the themes for the day drawn from the lectionary; the music scheme is published online.



Altar Servers

The Parish encourages young adults to be a part of the altar serving team, which currently has servers whose ages range between 8 and 27. Whilst primarily functioning at St James, the team also serves at joint worship services held at Castlethorpe, at special services for local Ebbsfleet parishes and for the last five years, has been asked to provide the serving team at the Walsingham Healing & Renewal pilgrimage. The team is headed up by Mike Parsons, who is also Sacristan at Hanslope and the Society of Our Lady of Walsingham Cell Secretary.

Inspire Youth Group

For over ten years now, St James the Great Hanslope has been running Inspire, a youth group for secondary school-aged children, on Fridays during term time from 3.30pm until 6.00pm. In that time membership has grown steadily to its present level of 14 young people who often say that Inspire is one of the highlights of their week.



Photo Mike Parsons

Food is provided (toasties, hotdogs or pizza, with biscuits and tea) and the children enjoy a relaxed environment, free from the hustle and bustle of everyday life and is one where they are able to engage with the adult leaders (of which there is a pool of five who, most weeks, all turn up as they get as much out of the group as the children do).

The last hour is normally given over to scripture-based discussion or tasks.

The young people continually amaze the leaders with their eagerness to explore new depths of understanding.

Walsingham Youth Pilgrimage

Each year since 2005 the benefice works with St Mary & St Giles, Stony Stratford and takes a group of Secondary School aged young people to the annual Walsingham Youth Pilgrimage. This is a hugely important part of our youth ministry and we typically take groups of between 16 and 25, occasionally more.

Hanslope Sunday School

Sunday School meets during the 11.00am Mass on all Sundays of the year, except during August. The children are gathered together during the first hymn and taken to the lower vestry for their session, returning to the service just before communion. We cater for three different age ranges with a lead person for each of these groups: Pebbles – Janet Shipton, Rocks – Wendy Thomson and Boulders – Diane Gordon. The material we use is produced by the Church Union. It is called “Foundations”, and follows the church year and is usually based upon the readings that are set for the day. This makes the sharing time that we have with the wider congregation after communion more meaningful.

We also hold All Age Mass several times during the year for feast days such as Harvest and Mothering Sunday. All the children participate to these events in a simplified service, sharing things they have prepared in Sunday School during the preceding weeks. We also involve the children in our mid-week Children’s and Young People’s groups.

Castlethorpe Sunday School

We run Sunday School during term time and it is held in the school building between 9.30 am and 10.10, at which point we walk the children across to the church for the last 20 minutes of Mass, during which we update the congregation on that session’s content.

We have a group of parents who mainly stay and take part in the lessons and help with the running of it. We currently have 6 regular attendees, and we hope to increase that number over time. The teaching follows the relevant scripture of the day but presented simply as our age group is quite young! With both Sunday School and Little Lambs, our aim is to create a welcoming introduction to young children to the church both in teaching and being comfortable with coming into the building itself.

Little Lambs

A weekly playgroup for parents , carers and children up to year 2, offering a meeting place and free play in the church. Activities include arts and crafts, often preparing for specific celebrations throughout the year. We have been running this group for 3 years and provide a very valuable link between the church and school. This runs between 2.30 and 4.30 every Friday during term time. It has an average attendance of around 15 children a week although we have had many more at times!



Photo P. Coleman



Little Angels

From small beginnings in 2012, Little Angels has become an established under-fives group in Hanslope. For the young children who attend it offers play, craft, songs and stories through which we offer simple Christian teaching where appropriate. This often leads to questions from the children's carers which enable us to share our faith.

We give pastoral support to our young mums: anything from an ear to share their concerns about child development to supporting mothers with special needs children, as well as those going through divorce, debt or even suffering from abuse. Little Angels provides a safe place for both carers and their children.

We are fortunate to have in our team two qualified teachers and a lay pioneer minister. Two young mums, who benefitted from Little Angels in the past, are also on our team.

Summer Holiday Club

The annual holiday club at St James has become an exciting event in the church calendar. From humble beginnings we have grown in experience, numbers and ambition. From a theatrical background herself and working now in a school, our leader Wendy Thomson has combined her 2 loves to lead a week of wonder and joy. The adults, young leaders and children involved work harmoniously together to bring a week of bible stories, drama, music, craft and prayer stations. From enthusiastic mayhem to the silence of prayer the children enjoy a week of friendship, activities and grow closer to God. Next year our holiday club is called Showstoppers combined with The Greatest Showman. Children can expect a fun packed week putting on the best show and discovering stories of the life of Jesus. Wendy is so looking forward to next year and hoping our new Assistant Priest will become involved.

Safeguarding

The Benefice Safeguarding Officer and Parish Priest work together to act on any safeguarding concerns and alerts that have been made, working closely with the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer. Our safeguarding policies and procedures cover all our groups and these are explained to volunteers as part of their induction when joining the groups.

The Safeguarding policy is reviewed in March each year, based on the Diocesan Safer Recruitment Policy.

Anyone involved in working with children or vulnerable adults is required to undertake C1 level training, whereas the Benefice Safeguarding Officer and members of the clergy are required to undertake level C3 training.

Level CO on-line training is a mandatory requirement for those helping at Holiday Club supported by training on the local context given by the Safeguarding Officer.

The Flower Teams

There is a creative team of 10 – 14 people at St James who enjoy decorating the church throughout the year and especially for the festivals. Most recently they have worked with the Ho Group in a successful Festival of Angels. Similarly, at Castlethorpe, flowers are provided through the year and at festivals by a dedicated team of volunteers from within and outside the church congregation.

Coffee mornings

Coffee Mornings at Castlethorpe Church are held on the third Saturday of every month. They are well attended and have become very popular with both churchgoers and non-churchgoers alike. These were introduced to help people socialise, get to know new people and to help combat isolation, especially, but not exclusively, amongst older residents.

Healing Ministry

For ten years we have held a Mass for Healing and Wholeness on the last Wednesday of alternate months. This includes the Laying on of Hands and Anointing immediately before the offertory. It can be attended by up to 25 or 30 people, mainly but not all from these two parishes. Confession is available afterwards; there are also opportunities for lighting candles and sprinkling with water from the well at Walsingham. People are free to use any or all or none of these ministries as they wish. Laying on of Hands and Anointing are also available during the administration of Holy Communion at the Sung Mass at Hanslope on the second Sunday of each month. Sometimes people have spoken movingly about how grateful they are for these ministries.

Health and Wellbeing Group

Seven years ago it was recognised that the Benefice had a role to play in the health and well-being of the local community. Accordingly a Health and Wellbeing group was set up. It currently comprises two retired GPs, a member of the local practice Patient Participation Group and the coordinator of the church community lunches. The group meets around six times per year and maintains close links with the local GP practice and other local organisations.

Since its formation, the group has established and maintained the following initiatives:

Church Community Lunches - held in church monthly, with donations going to Farm Africa. This attracts 30-40 parishioners from both villages and a few more for the Christmas lunch.

Teatime Treats - held monthly at Lincoln Court (sheltered accommodation in the centre of Hanslope) with entertainment and games. Usual attendance 30-40 older people from both villages. Transport is available.

Walk for Health - a monthly, led walking group with around a dozen regular attendees. Tea and cake is usually served in church after the walk.

Cancer Support Group - an initiative set up and run by the two retired doctors, meeting on the third Monday of the month in St James, providing information, support and signposting for cancer patients and their supporters. Numbers vary between 6-10. This initiative is well supported by the local GP practice. The group is listed on MacMillan's website as a support group.

Carers' Support Group - this group is run in partnership with the Patient Participation Group. It meets on the 4th Wednesday morning of the month in St James. Attendance is 10-12. Twice yearly there is a joint meeting with the Cancer Support group where there is a buffet lunch and speaker. This meeting is held in The Club, Hanslope. There is a link with MK Carers.

Mental Health Initiatives - various seminars and courses, run by external professionals, organised for the community, either free or at nominal cost. Funding for these has been supported by local charity FEOFFEE and/or by Milton Keynes Community Foundation:

- Parenting Course
- Mindfulness for adults and adolescents
- Managing Anxiety and Depression, run twice



The Ho Group and the Anglican Diocese of Ho, Ghana

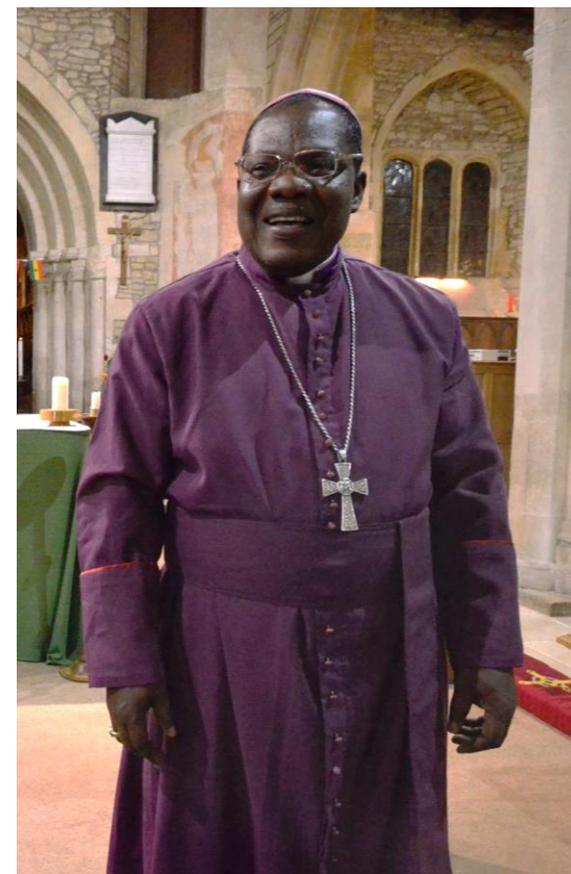
The Diocese was established in 2003. Bishop Matthias K Medadues-Badohu, its first bishop, cares for the Volta Region. The neighbouring country of Togo was added subsequently which brings the area he covers to about 23,000 sq. miles. There is no financial support from the Anglican Communion administration. The Diocese depends entirely on the efforts of its own parishes and the good will of individuals and parishes in other countries. In turn, every parish depends on the charity of its congregation.

Our link with Ho and one of its parishes, St Paul's, Agbozume, began in 2009 after Fr Gary met the Bishop at the Walsingham Youth Pilgrimage and brought him to Hanslope and Castlethorpe for an impromptu visit. The Ho Group was formed and aim to contribute between £1,500 and £2,000 each year towards clergy salaries and a project at St Paul's to provide a much needed home for their clergy as well, of course, for mutual support through prayer. Fundraising is always enjoyable with wide variety of events having been held over the years, including concerts, plant stalls and most recently a Festival of Angels, part of our annual Advent Ho Ho Ho Appeal.

Members from St James have made three visits to Ho and Agbozume learning a great deal and would love to visit again in 2020. We have developed good friendships with past and present clergy at St Paul's Agbozume and, of course, Bishop Matthias who has stayed in Hanslope on several occasions. In 2015 he installed Fr Gary as an Honorary Canon of Ho Cathedral.



Photos P. Coleman



Baptism

Typically there are between 12 and 20 baptisms each year and our Baptism Co-ordinator Yvonne Stewart handles the first contact and paperwork with families and liaises with the incumbent.

Heather Keough whose daughter was baptised at Castlethorpe in 2019 writes:

Following the birth of our baby girl, we were excited to join the local church community and organise her baptism.

The process was friendly and straightforward. Father Gary was easy to contact with his details on the church website, and via email, he put us in touch with the baptism coordinator for Castlethorpe and Hanslope. She came to meet us at home, and discussed details about the ceremony. Through her, we arranged an appropriate date and plan, which she relayed back to Father Gary. We then started to attend the Sunday services in Castlethorpe, where we received a warm welcome from everyone. As baptisms form part of the regular Sunday morning worship, it was important to us that we and our daughter were familiar with the service and had made links with the congregation.

In the week before the christening day, we were offered the opportunity to attend a short rehearsal in the church with Father Gary. We did this the day before the ceremony, along with our daughter's godparents, which was a great way for the priest to meet them, for the godparents to get familiar with the church, and for everyone to run through the ceremony prior to the big event!

The day of the baptism went smoothly. We loved having our family and loved-ones mix with our new friends in the congregation. Father Gary carried out a relaxed service, and it was great to see everyone forming part of the baptism, as well as the wider service and communion on the day. Our daughter was particularly enthralled with the lighting of her baptism candle, and we were pleased to take this home with us afterwards.

Since the baptism, Father Gary has supported our continued participation in church life. We look forward to growing with the church, and particularly seeing our daughter participate in the many activities the benefice runs for children.

Funerals & Churchyard

Funeral numbers vary but most village funerals are still conducted by the local clergy either in church or at local crematoria. Glyn Hollinshead serves as the Funeral Coordinator for the Benefice and is the first port of call for local undertakers with whom we have a good working relationship. The mowing and care of both churchyards is carried out by volunteers from the local community. At St James all the present burial plots, including the reserved ones, have been mapped onto a spreadsheet which has helped ascertain the location of unmarked grave spaces so that relatives have been able to erect a headstone long after the burial. At Castlethorpe Ron Wilson looks after churchyard administration and maintains an up-to-date list of burial plots.



Weddings

Wedding numbers are reasonably small and have decreased since the Church of England increased, significantly, the level of statutory fees payable. Save for exceptional circumstances we continue to offer marriage ceremonies only to those who have not been divorced with a previous spouse living, and where that is the case we regularly host services of Prayer & Dedication after a civil ceremony. A number of church members have been married in recent years and we have a series of memorable Nuptial Masses including the Bishop presiding at the marriage of the Parish Priest in 2018.

Kate and Thom Clubb were married at St James in 2015 and Kate writes:

My husband and I were married at St James the Great, Hanslope by Fr Gary in August 2015. Throughout the whole process of preparing for the big day, during the ceremony and the continued love and support thereafter, from discussing vows, assisting with the order of service and calming our nerves on the day itself we cannot thank Fr Gary enough.

We can honestly say that matrimony has been such a journey, not only in love but also with our own faith which continues to grow and strengthen day by day. Nobody could have prepared us for the overwhelming amount of warmth, happiness and contentment we felt within St James the Great that day- it is a truly blessed place that will always have a place within our hearts (along with Fr Gary too of course!). Following our marriage, we continue to attend Sunday worship and have had our daughters baptised at St James the Great.



Pilgrimage

The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham in North Norfolk has been a hugely important place of encounter, growth and spiritual renewal for members of the two churches of all ages. The parish has very strong links with the Shrine and members of the congregation are regular pilgrims.

In a typical year we attend:

- The National Pilgrimage *in May*
- The Youth Pilgrimage *in late July/August*
- The Pilgrimage for Healing and Renewal *on the August Bank Holiday*
- The Families Pilgrimage *in the October half-term*
- The Bible Weekend *in November*
- The 18-30s pilgrimage 'Adoremus' *in late November* as well as making private pilgrimages.

A growing number of people at St James are members of the Society of Our Lady of Walsingham and members of St James have been part of the Year4God Scheme in 2011/12 and part of the Youth Pilgrimage Ministry Team. Former Hanslope PCC member Stuart Grout now works full time at the Shrine as a Sacristan and Membership Assistant. The parish provides altar servers for the Healing & Renewal Pilgrimage and several parishioners are members of the Walsingham Partnership.

Walsingham Cell

27 church members belong to the Society of Our Lady of Walsingham as a way of staying in touch with and supporting the Shrine's work and have formed a local branch or Cell of the Society which meets periodically for worship and prayer.



Photo Graham Howard

Schools

Hanslope Primary School

Hanslope is a through primary catering for nearly 250 children from Reception to Year 6. At Castlethorpe the First School has 41 children on roll and has children in Reception to Year 2. Both schools are rated Outstanding by Ofsted.

Their headteachers share below something of their own thinking on the relationship between school and church.

“We are very lucky to have a close bond with St James’ and really value this connection. We are so privileged to work and live in a village whose community has been strengthened by the church. In many regards the work we do at Hanslope Primary tries to mirror the values and love shown to us by Fr. Gary and his team at St. James’. I envisage it as a golden thread woven through the village. Our children thoroughly enjoy the assemblies provided by Fr. Gary and we would really like links like this to continue and for a close friendship between the Church and the School to continue to flourish.”

*Ryan Fensham-Brown
Headteacher,*

Castlethorpe First School



Castlethorpe First School sees itself as part of the local community. We have had whole families that have come to the school over the years ...children, parents and grandparents. The school building is quite small so the village is an important ‘extension’ for the school: We use the village hall for PE lesson, the sports ground for Sports Day, Castle mound in our History lessons, the village for seasonal walks and the Church is another important component of the school curriculum and calendar.

We have strong links with the church. Father Gary is a school governor. Sunday school is held at the school and many of our children go to ‘Little Lambs’ after school on a Friday. We hold our Harvest Festival at the church each year with the children’s donations being added to the Church’s.

At Christmas we have a Christingle making afternoon in school, led by Father Gary and we perform our Nativity in the Church each year.

As part of the community we support the church’s ‘Flower Festival’ and the village ‘Open Gardens’ event with the children being involved in displaying their work at these events. These, we feel are important for the children, so that they learn what it means to be part of the community.

Julie Baldwin, Headteacher



Activities Social and Fund Raising

Annually During the Church Year

- Beginning of Advent – Hanslope’s Advent Fayre – Fund Raising for General Fund
- Mid Advent – Concert by MK Brass and the School Choir at Hanslope – for Bell Appeal
- Advent – Christmas Concert, this last year by Justin Lavender & Friends at Castlethorpe – for Building Appeal
- Easter Day or Easter Monday – Easter Egg Hunt at Castlethorpe – Social Event
- Easter Monday – Easter Egg Hunt at Hanslope – Fund Raising for General Fund
- Spring Bank holiday Sunday – Plant Sale in Aid of Ho
- May or June – Castlethorpe Duck Race – Bi Annually – Sunday 31st May 2020
- Second Friday of July – Annual Vicarage BBQ – Social Event
- Third Weekend of July – Hanslope’s Open Weekend – Fund Raising for General Fund
- Second Saturday of September – BHCT Ride and Stride – 50/50 Fundraising for General Fund
- October – Celebration Supper at Hanslope – Bi-Annually – due next in 2021
- Third Saturday of November – Castlethorpe’s Autumn Fayre

Additional fund raising events are organised throughout the year for Castlethorpe’s Building Appeal, Hanslope’s Bell/Roof Appeal and the Diocese of Ho. We also hold occasional new members’ suppers, and Cheese & Wine gatherings. Midweek festivals are followed by drinks.

Regular Monthly Activity

- Cancer Wellbeing and Support Group – 3rd Monday 8pm Hanslope Church
- Carer’s Support Group – Fourth Wednesday – 10.30am to 12.30pm – Hanslope Church
- Community Lunch – Third Thursday (not July and August) – 12.30pm Hanslope Church
- Walk for Health – 2nd Sunday – 2.00pm Hanslope church or as advertised
- Teatime Treats – 1st Monday – 2.00pm Lincoln Court
- Rosary Group – 1st Saturday – 4.30pm – Venues as advertised
- Castlethorpe Coffee Mornings – 3rd Saturday – 10.00am to 12noon

Regular Weekly Activity

Mondays	9.00am	Little Angels – Hanslope term time only
	9.00am	Little Angels Xtra – Hanslope in School Holidays
	5.00pm	Following the Silence – Hanslope Church
Tuesdays	2.00pm	Activity Afternoon – Hanslope in school holidays
Fridays	2.30pm	Little Lambs – Castlethorpe term time only
Fridays	3.30pm	Inspire! Youth Group – term-time only



Photo Trish Kempson

The Castlethorpe Duck Race

The Castlethorpe Duck Race and Fun Dog show is a bi-annual event which takes place on the River Tove just to the south of Castlethorpe village. It has been going since 1988 and originally was inaugurated by Richard Sawbridge to raise funds for the weir with surplus funds donated to the hospital scanner and to the parish church. Since the previous two beneficiaries have been satisfied all funds raised in the last few years have benefitted the parish church. Sadly Richard passed away in 2018 but the event still remains as one of his many legacies.

The last two Duck Races have been focusing on the improvements for the church building and have been supported wholly by the village itself and the wider community.

However, it is completely dependent on the weather and the 2018 event was the best ever raising around £12,000 on a gloriously sunny day with over 3,000 people in attendance.

The last two events have been organised and run by a local organisation, Inspire Change that worked tirelessly to ensure its success and devoted the resources of time and staff.

The 2020 event will be run by a new team but thankfully Inspire Change will still be in the background with their support and guidance. This new team is headed by Tracey Jones who has lived in the village for around four years and she has a very enthusiastic and strong team around her.

Next year's date is May 31st.



7. The Two Villages

Hanslope

Set in the beautiful countryside of north Buckinghamshire but only ten miles from the centre of Milton Keynes, the two villages of Hanslope and Castlethorpe have formed the joint benefice for a thousand years. Stretching from the ancient Salcey Forest in the east to the Grand Union canal in the west, and from the border with Northamptonshire down to the outskirts of Milton Keynes, the area combines farmland, sheep country, historic townscape and modern development, all with ready access to rail, motorway and airport facilities.

Hanslope currently has some 2700 people living in it, though this number is increasing steadily as new housing developments come on stream. The community is well-provided for, with a primary school, GP's surgery and pharmacy, two shops including a bakery, three pubs, a take-away, a master butcher's and a village hall, together with a large recreation ground and well-equipped pavilion.



Photo Steven Howe

Just outside the village is Hanslope Park, a Foreign and Commonwealth Office and HMGCC outpost which employs nearly 1000 staff. The nearest towns, each about nine miles away and served by an hourly bus service, are Northampton and Milton Keynes (including Stony Stratford and Wolverton) with ready access to the A5 and M1. The West Coast Main Line delivers passengers to London Euston within 40 minutes. London Luton airport is half an hour away.

The village has a number of clubs and special interest groups, including football, cricket, an historical society, amateur dramatics and a youth club, with participation in local choirs and fitness classes amongst other things

The Hanslope community has three places of worship: a Methodist chapel, a Gospel Hall and the thousand year old parish church of St James the Great, whose great spire, it is said, can be seen from six counties.



Snow Day at Castlethorpe by local artist ©Fiona Abel-Smith

Castlethorpe

The village of Castlethorpe is situated in North Buckinghamshire near the border with Northamptonshire, surrounded by farmland and about a mile and a half from Hanslope. The village community of around a thousand is serviced by a village post office and shop. There is a First School, and a Village Hall, all grouped round the centuries-old parish church SS Simon and Jude. Other facilities include nursery and pre-school, two children's play areas, and a well-equipped sports ground. There is a wide range of clubs and societies. The local GP surgery and pharmacy is a short bus ride away, in Hanslope.

The hourly bus service connects Castlethorpe with the nearby town of Wolverton and the much larger ones of Milton Keynes and Northampton which are within ten miles. Transport links are exceptional, with railway stations in Northampton and Wolverton, as well as intercity services from Milton Keynes Central (on the West Coast Main Line, 40 minutes from London Euston) and easy access to the M1, M6, M25, A5 and A45. London Heathrow and London Luton airports as well as Birmingham International and East Midlands airports are within two hours' drive.

There is much more information about the village to be found online at castlethorpevillage.org.uk and a wealth of historical details at mkheritage.co.uk.

8. Organisation and Finance

HANSLOPE PCC

The affairs of the parish are about average for its size, and most of the business of the Council is carried out at full PCC meetings which are held seven times a year.

Standing Committee:

This committee, which is required by law, has the power to transact the business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to any direction given by the full Council. It consists of the assistant priest, churchwardens, treasurer and secretary. This group meets around two weeks prior to the PCC meeting, receives the reports from the sub-committees and working groups, follows up on progress since the last PCC meeting and sets the agenda for the PCC meeting.

Sub-Committees and Working Groups:

The PCC has set up these groups in order to move forward with some specific areas of work. The groups report back to the PCC meetings via the Standing Committee.

The sub-committees and groups that we currently have are:

- Wellbeing Sub-committee
- Ho working Group
- Bell Restoration Appeal Sub-committee
- Healing Group.
- Open Weekend Working Group
- Welcoming Sub-Group

Finance:

The PCC holds its money in a Lloyds current account, a CBF deposit fund and a CBF investment bond. Decisions on financial matters are made at the PCC meetings. Currently payments are made by cheques requiring two out of four signatories (Parish priest, Treasurer and Churchwardens). We are working towards operating a BACS system for payments and hope to achieve this in 2020.

The value of our assets at the end of 2018 was just over £100K. We operate receipts and payments accounts and our income to the General Fund, which in 2018 was just over £50K. Our expenses were just over £49K. Although we ended the financial year 2018 with a £3K deficit on the General Fund, we are working hard to reduce this with our focus on planned and tax-efficient giving.

Stewardship:

We operate a well-maintained planned giving scheme with a membership of around 50 generating an annual income of around £22K. We run a bi-annual Christian Giving Programme. At the end of 2019 we introduced the Parish Giving Scheme with its incentives of inflation proofing and its ability to reclaim the gift aid contributions on a monthly basis. We do not know the outcome of this but early indications show that many of our regular givers have increased their giving as they changed to the new method of giving.



Hanslope's Congregation on December 22nd

Photo P.Coleman

CASTLETHORPE PCC

Members of the Castlethorpe PCC meet bi-monthly with the standing Committee meeting in between to manage the day-to-day workings of SS Simon & Jude. There are also sub committees who meet regularly as required.

All is presently focused in particular on achieving the planned redevelopment of the church which will enable it to be used by more members of our community and so to help to spread God's message. Finances are tight but Castlethorpe has always paid its Parish Share in full, due mainly to the Parish Giving Scheme and generous parishioners. This, coupled with successful fundraising events, more popular each year, we are able to start our redevelopment scheme with a figure of £23,000 in the fund.



Castlethorpe's Congregation on December 22nd

9. The Clergy House

The clergy house for the new Assistant Priest is a modern four-bedroom house, centrally situated in Western Drive, Hanslope opposite the local Surgery. The property is a short walk from St James the Great, and on the junction with Castlethorpe Road.

The house has been undergoing a substantial scheme of renovation recently and has a kitchen, cloakroom, bathroom and *en suite* shower room upstairs all of which are newly fitted. Downstairs, in addition to the kitchen, there is cloakroom and a substantial lounge diner which runs the full width of the house, from which French Doors lead to the back garden and a further door to a newly built conservatory which also leads out onto the garden.

The house has four good sized bedrooms, one with an *en suite* shower room. The bathroom also has an electric shower. There is an integral garage which has plumbing for a washing machine and space for an additional fridge-freezer. There is parking for at least two if not three vehicles to the front of the property. The rear garden is laid to lawn with two patio areas. The property benefits from a new boiler and has new carpet and vinyl flooring throughout and has been completely redecorated. The property is also well insulated to current standards. The house is already vacant and will be ready for you to move in by Lent!



10. The Deanery of Newport

The Deanery of Newport sits in the north east corner of the Diocese of Oxford and is bounded by deaneries in the dioceses of Peterborough and St Albans. The population of approximately 32,500 is split one third, 10,900 people, across our rural communities with 19 churches, and two thirds, 21,600 people, in our two market towns of Olney and Newport Pagnell with three churches. The deanery has 5.5 stipendiary clergy covering 7 benefices, two of which are held in plurality.

As part of the Borough of Milton Keynes, there is an increasing demand for the provision of new housing in an area earmarked for major regional housing and employment growth. 'PLAN:MK', a draft 15 year building programme of 40,000 new homes, contains several proposals which impact the Newport Deanery, and we are expecting population in the deanery to expand by up to 107% over the next 20 years.

The deanery is actively working with the neighbouring Milton Keynes Deanery and the Archdeaconry of Buckingham to consider responses to current and future housing developments with informal and formal structural changes, in addition to accommodating the evolving nature of our mission and worshipping communities.

The current challenge remains the balancing of areas and churches that are investing and maintaining dynamic growth, alongside those which are struggling to sustain their church communities and attract more lay involvement. As we respond to this, the deanery continues to explore ways of sharing resources and gifts, with established and new programmes of mission at the local level.

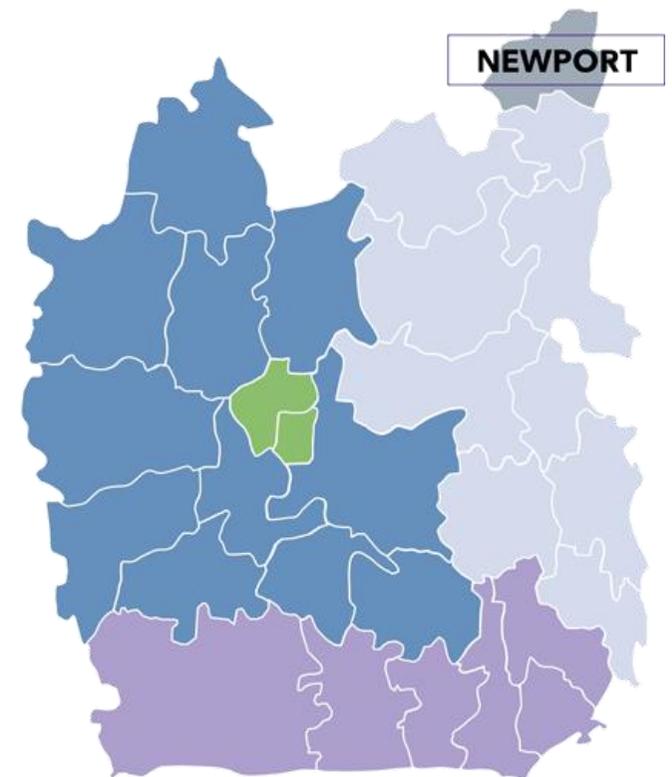
As a Group Ministry, the deanery is home to diverse traditions, representing almost the full range of the Anglican spectrum. This is fully respected and reflected in locally held benefice plans for mission, and supported by a strong commitment to shared deanery working wherever there are common interests and needs. Deanery Synod is well attended as a result. We believe there is much to build on here for the future. The deanery encourages shared leadership roles, with deanery-wide specialisms and/or roles assisting in the day-to-day operations which includes a vocations advisor, a marriage surrogate and an officer for retired clergy from amongst the ranks of the Deanery's clergy.

Formal and informal support exists between ordained and lay leadership with shared ministry addressing mission plans, resources and cover for sacramental ministry. holiday and sickness. This includes support for benefices in terms of filling vacancies and developing sustainable ministry patterns for the future. These are underpinned through the encouraging, enabling and releasing of our membership and congregations to minister fully to their communities as part of our living faith, becoming a more Christ-like church, will remain a fundamental and critical element for the future. We are excited by the opportunities and working relationships are friendly and mutually supportive.

Our Deanery Chapter meets formally ten times a year and also enjoys gathering socially. Attendance at Chapter is good and it is hoped that whoever is appointed to serve within the Deanery will take a full part in our shared life. We look forward to working with you.

The Revd Canon Gary Ecclestone SSC Area Dean

Tim Edwards Lay Chair



11. Oxford Diocese

The Diocese of Oxford serves the mission of the Church in Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Oxfordshire. The Diocese comprises more than 600 parishes, with over 800 churches, serving a diverse population of more than 2 million people located in all types of settings.

Due to the size and complexity of the Diocese, we have three Area Bishops who exercise considerable strategic & pastoral oversight for their Archdeaconries. The Bishop of Buckingham is the Rt Rev'd Alan Wilson who has been the Area Bishop since 2003.

With the appointment of the new Bishop of Oxford, the Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft, a new common vision is emerging for the Diocese of Oxford.

The vision addresses what kind of church we are called to be – A Christ-like Church.

What are the marks of a Christ-like Church? To be the Church of the Beatitudes:

- Contemplative
- Compassionate
- Courageous

It also asks what we are therefore called to do together. This is currently a work in progress, but is likely to cover the following strategic priorities:

- To make a bigger difference in the world and serve the poor
- To share our faith with adults, children and young people and grow the church in every place; rural, urban and suburban
- To plant new churches and congregations everywhere we can
- To serve every school in our community
- To put the discipleship of all at the heart of our common life and set God's people free
- To celebrate and bless our largest, fastest growing city Milton Keynes

These priorities will be supported centrally by resources, training, conferences, workshops, and much more. The diocese is inviting benefices and their priests to share a vision rather than demanding a response. It wants all its priests to flourish in ministry and to deepen their enjoyment of God.

Alongside the emerging diocesan vision, the priorities and principles for the Buckingham Archdeaconry are set out in our Buckingham Mission Action Plan (see www.oxford.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Bucks-Archdeaconry-Plan-0515.pdf)

It is expected that all clergy appointed into the Archdeaconry of Buckingham will want to commit themselves to the Diocesan vision and Archdeaconry MAP and their strategic directions.





FOR

THE PARISHES
OF
HANSLOPE
&
CASTLETHORPE

Appendix A

The following provisional role description will apply from the date of licensing. It will be reviewed by the postholder and the Archdeacon of Buckingham approximately six months after the date of licensing. Amendments will be made where necessary, by agreement.

PROVISIONAL ROLE DESCRIPTION

SECTION ONE: DETAILS OF POST

Role title:	Associate Priest (five years)
Type of Role:	Full time, stipendiary, time limited to five years. The post is created because of the Incumbent of Hanslope and Castlethorpe's authorised absence from duty and therefore designated as a time-limited post, of not more than five years from the date of licencing, under Ecclesiastical Office Terms of Service Regulations 2010 (as amended) section 29 (1) (a)
Name of benefice:	Hanslope & Castlethorpe
Episcopal area:	Buckingham
Deanery:	Newport
Archdeaconry:	Buckingham
Conditions of Service:	Please refer to Statements of Particulars document issued in conjunction with this role description
Key contact for Clergy Terms of Service:	Archdeacon of Buckingham This time-limited role falls within the Clergy Terms of Service formally known as Common Tenure. The Archdeacon of Buckingham is the designated person by the Bishop of Oxford to issue the Statement of Particulars for the post holder.
Accountability:	Priests share with the Bishop in the oversight of the Church. Whilst, as an office holder, the individual is expected to lead and prioritise work in line with the purpose of the role, they are encouraged to inform the Archdeacon, Incumbent and Churchwardens about any issues exceptional or otherwise that have the potential to affect ongoing delivery of ministry
Additional Responsibility:	N/A

SECTION TWO: CONTEXT

Wider Context

With the appointment of the new Bishop of Oxford the Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft a new common vision is emerging for the Diocese of Oxford ...

The vision addresses what kind of church we are called to be – A Christ-like Church for the sake of the world.

What are the marks of a Christ-like Church? To be the Church of the Beatitudes:

- Contemplative
- Compassionate
- Courageous

It also asks what we are therefore called to do together. This is currently a work in progress, but is likely to cover some of the following strategic priorities:

- Make a difference in the world
- Support and grow the local church
- Establish new churches and congregations
- Serve our schools
- Renew discipleship and ministry

These priorities will be supported centrally by resources, training, conferences, workshops, and much more. The diocese is inviting benefices and their priests to share a vision rather than demanding a response. It wants all its priests to flourish in ministry and to deepen their enjoyment of God.

Local Context

Fr Gary is being seconded by Bishop Jonathan Goodall to work as his Parish Development Mentor across the Ebbsfleet Area. He will continue to serve as Parish Priest and Area Dean but much of his parish role will be delegated to the new Assistant Priest who will become the main and most visible face of the Church in the two communities. Fr Gary will continue to chair Castlethorpe PCC at least until the conclusion of the current building redevelopment project, but will delegate Hanslope PCC and the management of the day to day running of the two churches and their ministry. Fr Gary expects to lead public worship one Sunday a month and help in a small number of defined areas as agreed with the newly appointed colleague. He will remain in regular contact with the new Assistant Priest to support, advise and encourage, especially so if the person appointed is moving into a post of responsibility from a curacy.

For more information, see the parish profile.

SECTION THREE: ROLE PURPOSE AND KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

General:

- A. To exercise the cure of souls shared with the bishop in *this benefice* in collaboration with colleagues, including the praying of the Daily Office, the administration of the sacraments and preaching
- B. To have regard to the calling and responsibilities of the clergy (as described in the Canons, the Ordinal, the Code of Professional Conduct for the Clergy) and other relevant legislation including
 - bringing the grace and truth of Christ to this generation and making him known to those in your care
 - instructing the parishioners in the Christian faith
 - preparing candidates for baptism and confirmation

- diligently visiting the parishioners of the benefice, particularly those who are sick and infirm
- providing spiritual counsel and advice
- consulting with the Parochial Church Council on matters of general concern and importance to the benefice
- bringing the needs of the world before God in intercession
- calling your hearers to repentance and declaring in Christ's name the absolution and forgiveness of their sins
- blessing people in God's name
- preparing people for their death
- discerning and fostering the gifts of all God's people
- being faithful in prayer, expectant and watchful for the signs of God's presence, as he reveals his kingdom among us

C. To share in the wider work of the deanery and diocese as appropriate, for the building up of the whole Body of Christ

Key responsibilities specific to the local situation

- Working collaboratively with Fr Gary and the two PCCs
- Chairing Hanslope PCC

Other responsibilities

- Participate in the Bishop's Ministerial Development Review scheme and engage in Continuing Ministerial Development
- Carry out any other duties and responsibilities as required in line with the benefice needs.
- Take care for their wellbeing including health and safety and building a good repertoire of spiritual and psychological strategies

SECTION FOUR: BENEFICE SUMMARY

The Benefice of

Benefice: Hanslope and Castlethorpe

Patron(s): The Bishop of Oxford

PCCs: 2

Churchwardens: 4

Ministers: Incumbent The Revd Canon Gary Ecclestone SSC and retired colleagues Fr Robert Nokes and Fr Robin Carter SSC

Benefice paid staff: None are employed by the PCC

Buildings: 2

Churchyard(s): 2

Church Tradition: Traditional Catholic

Pastoral Reorganisation proposals: A Deanery Reorganisation is being planned at present

For more detailed information, please refer to the Parish Profile.

SECTION FIVE: KEY CONTACTS FOR THE ROLE Generic and specific to the role

Groups & committees

- The PCC(s)
- Deanery Chapter
- Deanery Synod
- Deanery Pastoral Committee

In the benefice

- Churchwardens
- Ministerial Colleagues
- Head teacher(s) of local school(s)

Support structures

- Parish Priest
- Area Dean
- Area Bishop
- Area Archdeacon
- Spiritual director, work consultant, etc
- Staff at The Diocesan Office with key responsibilities for various aspects of supporting
- The Bishop of Ebbsfleet
- Local Ebbsfleet Clergy

SECTION SIX: OTHER

This role description is issued alongside and should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- The Ordinal
- The Canons of the Church of England
- Guidance for the Professional Conduct of Clergy
- Bishop's Licence
- Statement of Particulars issued to the office-holder on successful appointment
- Diocesan Clergy Handbook
- Parish Profile
- Ministry Action Plans (MAPs)
- Any objectives discussed and agreed between the post holder and the supervising minister

Role description signed off by: The Venerable Guy Elsmore, Archdeacon of Buckingham

_____ Date:

To be reviewed next on: