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November 2025

## **Rector – Holkham Benefice**

Dear Friends in Christ,

### **Benefice and Role**

Thank you for inquiring for details for this post. You will find much detailed information about the benefice in the profile, and this letter supplements that with further information about the diocese and about the background to the post. If you are exploring this role from outside the diocese, and especially if you do not come from a rural background, let me encourage you to continue in this discernment. Norfolk people don't shout about themselves or their county or their diocese, but if you come here, there's a very high chance that you will never wish to leave.

The Holkham benefice includes the parishes of Wells next the Sea, Wighton, Warham and Holkham. Wells next the Sea is the largest of these and the church building enjoys a prominent place in the town. It has recently benefited from a significant restoration and welcomes people from within and beyond the benefice, including those who come regularly or occasionally on holiday.

The parishes take care to be welcoming and hospitable, have an inclusive ethos and are always alert to developing good community relationships. The benefice will value a rector who is seen around and who is known not only by the congregations but by the wider community and who makes connections with local organisations and institutions from schools to care homes. Many of the parishes' events, are designed to encourage the boundaries of the church to be porous so that the wider 'fringe' of the Church of England still apparent in rural areas, can know that the parish church is their church. The benefice is thus open to those who feel that they belong before they believe.

That having been said, the benefice has long had a genuine commitment to people's personal journeys of faith. The next rector will be someone who is able to accompany people on their faith pilgrimage and who actively seeks opportunities to draw others into the household of faith.

The Bishop and Archdeacon expect to include starting at least one new worshipping community within three years and we would welcome a new incumbent who will discern how this is most appropriately done. There is a good foundation upon which to build, not least by expanding current Easter and Christmas activities and enabling good follow-up. There is also plenty of scope to ensure that there are opportunities for inquirers to learn about the faith and for disciples to deepen their faith: discipleship development was expressly requested as the vacancy began.

The benefice is coastal and varied. The Holkham estate of Lord Leicester attracts tourists from far afield and suggests a level of affluence not experienced in all the parishes. The Church Urban Fund tool (<https://cuf.org.uk/shinealight>) highlights the deprivation present and a new incumbent will want to be aware of the church's role, in partnership with other local agencies, in relieving this.

### **Diocese and Deanery**

The Diocese of Norwich's vision is to be Transformed by Christ: Prayerful, Pastoral, Prophetic. You can find out more information about this at <https://www.dioceseofnorwich.org/about/vision/>.

We are drawing together the strategic project work you will see described there to create a mission and ministry strategy for a sustainable and flourishing future. The Diocese has various ways in which lay people can participate in pastoral care and in leading worship, including as LLMs but also as Authorised Worship Assistants and Authorised Pastoral Assistants.

The Benefice falls within the Archdeaconry and Area of Lynn and within the Burnham & Walsingham Deanery. The Bishop of Norwich is currently discerning the next Rural Dean. The Bishop of Lynn's area of oversight is coterminous with the archdeaconry and both the Venerable Catherine Dobson and the Rt Revd Dr Jane Steen are committed to the flourishing of rural benefices.

There are 6 posts of incumbent status in the Deanery, one of which is half-time in village parishes. There are 2 Authorised Worship Assistants (AWAs) in the benefice and 13 AWAs in the deanery, enabling laity to lead services of the Word. There are 2 Authorised Pastoral Assistants (APAs) in the deanery.

Attendance at Deanery Synod and Chapter is an expectation, and all diocesan clergy are encouraged to give some part of their time and energies to the wider life of the Diocese.

### **Housing**

The accommodation provided is described in the profile. Questions about the house should be directed to the Archdeacon of Lynn, the Venerable Catherine Dobson at ([archdeacon.lynn@dioceseofnorwich.org](mailto:archdeacon.lynn@dioceseofnorwich.org)).

**Patronage**

Patrons for the benefice are:

The Rt Hon. Thomas Edward Coke, Lord Leicester  
Dean & Chapter, Norwich Cathedral  
Michael Beddard

The closing date for applications is 09:00 on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2026 and interviews will be held on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2026. The post is subject to a Genuine Occupational Requirement and a satisfactory enhanced DBS disclosure.

If you would like to have an informal discussion before deciding whether to apply, please contact Ann Whittet (PA to the Bishop and Archdeacon of Lynn) at [ann.whittet@dioceseofnorwich.org](mailto:ann.whittet@dioceseofnorwich.org) or phone the office on 01362 709200.

It is usually better to direct inquiries to Ann but alternatively, you are able to contact one or other of us at: [bishop.lynn@dioceseofnorwich.org](mailto:bishop.lynn@dioceseofnorwich.org) or [archdeacon.lynn@dioceseofnorwich.org](mailto:archdeacon.lynn@dioceseofnorwich.org).

With grace and peace as you discern the role to which God is calling you,

Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jane Steen', with a stylized, cursive script.

**The Rt Revd Dr Jane Steen, Bishop of Lynn**