

Fen Edge Churches

Benefice Profile

Our Heart & Vision



St Nicholas Church, Glatton



All Saints Church, Sawtry



St Giles Church, Holme

Contact details @ <https://fenedgechurches.org/contact/>
2025 Introduction from Bishop for parish profile: Fen Edge Benefice

A message from Bishop Dagmar, acting Bishop of Ely:

Rector of Sawtry, Glatton & Holme with Conington – the Fen Edge

Thank you for taking an interest in this lovely post in the Deanery of Yaxley. You will be building on good foundations laid by the previous incumbent. My senior colleagues will support and work with you to ensure that this role is life giving and fruitful for you and any family you may have.

Ely Diocese has been going through a time of change and now has a new Diocesan Secretary and, soon we hope, a new Diocesan Bishop. Nonetheless our strategy is clear: we aim to support our clergy with great housing, hopeful chapters, strong investment in training and supervision, and targeted support to grow new disciples, especially among children and families.

The Fen Edge benefice is a perfect location to see this come together. The 3 parishes have excellent schools. The villages have a strong sense of identity, and the church is highly valued. There are good PCCs, retired clergy colleagues and excellent lay leaders. There are strong connections across the deanery and diocese.

We pride ourselves, as a diocese, on having a high percentage of women in incumbent posts, and we are working to grow numbers of Global Majority Heritage clergy. We are actively working to ensure that our clergy receive the best support and care that we can achieve.

We want you to thrive, to belong, to grow with us and contribute to our life together. If you would like to find out more about this post, or life in the diocese please speak to:



Ven Richard Harlow, Archdeacon of Huntingdon & Wisbech
Tel: 07415 757527 e: archdeacon.handw@elydiocese.org

Or

Rev Lynda Davies, Dean of Women's Ministry
e: revlyndadavies559@gmail.com

This Benefice Profile is structured under 4 main headings:

1. Our New Rector

2. Our Benefice

3. Building Up

- a. Worship
- b. Bible Study
- c. Youth/Children
- d. Summer Holiday Camp

4. Building Out

- a. Schools
- b. Socials
- c. Links with Community Groups
- d. Coffee Ark
- e. Social Media

Appendices:

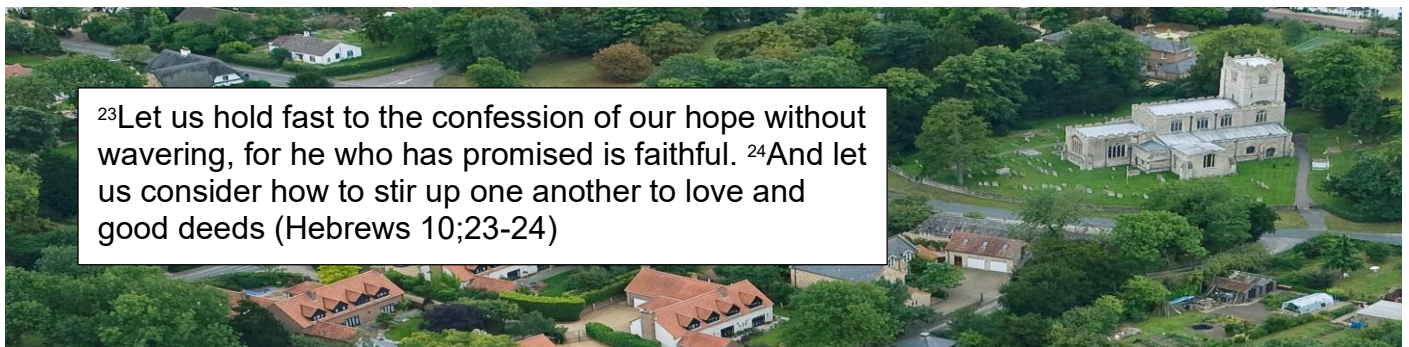
- A. Attractive Location
- B. Parish Overviews
- C. The Rectory

Fen Edge Churches Benefice Profile

OUR VISION

*To be a growing church as we reach out into our communities
to serve and witness to God's Kingdom*

Together we seek to represent and grow God's Kingdom in our village communities of Sawtry, Glatton, Holme and Conington. We believe we are called to take the church into the communities through a wide range of activities with a special focus on the schools and children/youth. As four, distinct villages we pray that generous, gracious friendships and sharing of God's gifts and resources is at the heart of seeing God grow His influence as well as encouraging our Christian witness.



²³Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful. ²⁴And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good deeds (Hebrews 10;23-24)

Introduction

Welcome to our Benefice Profile which is designed to offer a comprehensive overview of the church ministries located in this appealing area. Sawtry lies just west of the Fens, halfway between the city of Peterborough and the town of Huntingdon. Neighbouring villages include Glatton, Holme, Conington, Yaxley, Stilton and Alconbury.

With its proximity to the A1(M), Sawtry is a desirable location for commuters, providing excellent transport links via both rail (with Peterborough and Huntingdon stations nearby) and major roadways. Cambridge is also within easy reach by bus, or by car using the newly completed A14.

A summary of this attractive area can be found in **Appendix A**. A brief overview of the parishes, All Saints (Sawtry), St Nicholas (Glatton) and St Giles (Holme), together with All Saints (Conington), is provided in **Appendix B**.

The parishes demonstrate a strong commitment to working together in pursuit of their shared mission. This spirit of partnership is actively encouraged within the Benefice, fostering a sense of unity whilst also respecting the distinct identities present among the church communities. Both contemporary evangelical with modern music and traditional worship with established hymns and liturgies are recognised and valued, supporting the different needs and approaches of each parish. Through this understanding, the Benefice can respond to the differing parishes by providing a range of worship styles, ensuring that all parishioners feel supported in their spiritual journeys.

Our New Rector

The new Rector will receive a warm welcome from all three active parishes Sawtry, Glatton and Holme; All Saints church in Conington is in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust, although St Giles church holds two annual services in May and September. The incumbent will be supported enthusiastically by the church wardens and PCCs who work together both within the Benefice Council and as distinct PCCs.

Clergy Support and Ministry Partnerships

The Rector will benefit from the valuable support of two highly experienced retired clergy residing within Sawtry. Their presence in the community provides an additional layer of pastoral expertise and practical assistance, offering both guidance and collaborative opportunities in the delivery of ministry across the Benefice.

In addition, the Rector will find a well-established and productive working relationship with Rev Diane Kutar, the Rector of the Stilton Group of Churches. This connection has enabled the sharing of ministry resources and approaches, fostering a spirit of cooperation and mutual support that enhances ministry effectiveness across neighbouring parishes.

Additionally, partnerships with Yaxley Deanery clergy are essential as the region grows due to new housing developments. The Rector and colleagues will play an integral role in meeting the pastoral and spiritual needs of these growing communities, ensuring a cohesive and supportive approach to ministry throughout the region.

Administrative Support within the Benefice

The Rector will benefit from the dedicated support of Kara Wyatt, the Benefice's reliable church administrator. She currently works approximately seven hours each week and is managed by Cheryl Elmer, Church Warden at All Saints, Sawtry. Kara ensures efficient operations through her office software skills and serves as the central point of contact and co-ordination for weddings, funerals and baptisms. This central role helps maintain clear communication and organisation across these important occasions.

In addition, Kara collaborates closely with the church wardens to produce the Benefice's monthly electronic newsletter, keeping parishioners updated on services and events.

Cheryl Elmer also serves as the Benefice Safeguarding Officer, overseeing a comprehensive safeguarding dashboard. All church wardens and PCC members have completed their safeguarding training. The church administrator, together with David Perry - one of two treasurers across the three parishes - will efficiently support and co-ordinate the Rector's expenses.

Expectations for the New Rector's Ministry

The Benefice eagerly anticipates the new Rector bringing their unique spiritual life skills, perspectives and passion to the role. The following aspects outline the ministry expectations and opportunities awaiting the new incumbent:

Adaptable and Tailored Ministry

The three active parishes within the Benefice each possess distinct demographics, worship styles, and growth challenges. The new Rector is encouraged to adopt a ministry approach that is both tailored and adaptable, ensuring that the varied needs and characteristics of each parish are met effectively.

Passion for Mission and Community Engagement

A core expectation is a genuine enthusiasm for mission, demonstrated through active engagement with local communities. The Rector should enhance outreach by employing strong communication and interpersonal skills, enabling effective interaction with groups of all ages.

Children and Youth Ministry

Continuing and nurturing the growth of children and youth ministries is a priority. The Benefice values a Rector with a heartfelt commitment to developing these vital areas, ensuring that young people are supported in their spiritual journeys.

Strong Relationships with Local Schools

Building on the established, close working relationships with Holme CofE Primary Academy and the Sawtry schools (Infant, Junior Academy, and Village Academy) is essential. Productive interaction with these schools and active participation in village life, with a particular focus on families with young children, are central to the Rector's role.

Equipping and Empowering the Fellowship

The Rector is also expected to encourage and equip members of the fellowships in their personal spiritual growth and the development of their individual gifts. By supporting church members in fulfilling their callings and sharing their faith, the Rector will help to advance the vision of 'taking the church into the community'.

Financial Awareness

The Rector will have an awareness of rural ministries and the challenges of maintaining listed churches to encourage our PCCs in the development of budget setting and fund-raising plans.

Attractive Features of the Appointment

The appointment of a new Rector presents a unique and rewarding opportunity, particularly when considering the many appealing aspects of the village and rural setting. The environment is both welcoming and supportive, offering a strong sense of community that is further enhanced by the presence of excellent local schools. These schools not only provide high-quality education but also serve as important hubs for building relationships and engaging with families and young children.

In addition, the area boasts a wide range of social and sports clubs, ensuring that there are activities and interests to suit all ages and backgrounds. This breadth of extracurricular options contributes significantly to the vibrancy and inclusivity of village life.

Furthermore, the location offers excellent access to major towns and road networks, making travel and connectivity straightforward and convenient. This accessibility allows the Rector to easily reach wider communities and resources, further supporting their ministry and outreach efforts.

Finally, the Rectory in Sawtry itself presents a substantial and comfortable residence, ideally situated to serve the needs of the Rector and their family. Its proximity to the benefice churches, schools, shops, medical centre and local amenities ensures that the Rector will be well-placed to immerse themselves fully in parish and community life.

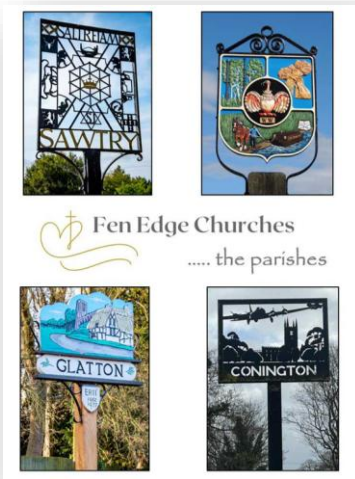


A substantial four bedroomed, detached house built in 1963, facing South-West on a quiet, half-acre plot.

The building is in a good state of repair and underwent an extensive upgrade, including the addition of a study/office extension, ten years ago. Details of the house are at **Appendix C**.

Together, these factors make this position an exciting and highly attractive prospect for any incoming Rector, providing all the essential elements needed to thrive in ministry and community engagement.

Our Benefice



The Benefice

We are grateful to our outgoing incumbent for forming the new Fen Edge Churches Benefice in 2022. This structure enables more efficient ministry, better use of resources and improved co-ordination, while minimizing duplication for the Rector.

The Benefice Council meets annually, streamlining communication by allowing PCCs to add agenda items.

Partnership within the Benefice remains essential to our ministry and mission. Each church maintains its unique character, with shared support across the Benefice helping us all to flourish.

Status

Quinquennial Inspections have been completed for all three churches: St Nicholas in 2022, St Giles and All Saints in 2025.

Additionally, after the Archdeacon of Huntingdon and Wisbech visited in October 2025, the churches were found to be in excellent condition regarding their management, policies and processes.

Finance

Each parish maintains its own bank accounts and continues to operate autonomously, although some costs are shared. As we face the challenge of delivering our Parish Share (PS), agreed each year with the Deanery, we have an element of flexibility and mutual help to deliver this, not as parishes, but across the Benefice. Our PS target this year is £42,340. The Benefice has shown year-on-year tangible growth to our PS contribution.

That said, the future challenge is financial sustainability faced with both small rural congregations and Quinquennial Inspection fabric reports: @ All Saints - dampness treatment and roof repairs; @ St Nicholas - floor repairs; @St Giles - roof repairs and drainage system from the roof.

As a Benefice we have adopted the Parish Giving Scheme and are encouraging as many as we can to join the scheme to underpin the annual budget development. In addition, All Saints and St Nicholas have invested in using the 'Colectin' / SumUp payment card machines for our services.

Churches Together

We also participate in 'Churches Together' services and Lent / Christmas bible study discussion groups with the Sawtry Methodist Church.

Deanery Links

The Yaxley Deanery Chapter maintains strong mutual support among its parishes. Notably, the Rector will see that shared initiatives - such as Advent and Lent Study groups - are collaboratively planned and conducted with the Stilton Group of Churches. These efforts have also led to success in the expanding 'Youth Space' program.

Building Up (Knowing Christ)

Worship Across the Benefice

Across the Benefice, we celebrate a diverse array of worship styles and traditions, reflecting the richness of our community. Services are led by both lay members and clergy, adhering to a well-established monthly pattern. This approach is designed to nurture and uphold the various forms of worship and musical expression present within our parishes, thereby providing a genuine range of services to meet differing spiritual needs within our community.

By embracing these varied traditions, we actively encourage collaboration and a sense of unity, moving away from a strictly parish-focused way of working. This not only strengthens our collective identity but also ensures that the worship experience remains inclusive and accessible.

Looking ahead, we are eager to see how the new Rector will continue to support and enhance the distinct needs of each parish, fostering further growth and engagement among all members of the Benefice.

Fen Edge Churches - Services Rota			
	St Giles, Holme	St Nicholas, Glatton	All Saints, Sawtry
1 st Sunday	9am Holy Communion	9am Occasional BCP Morning Prayer 4pm Summer months Evening Prayer & Praise	10:30am Holy Communion
2 nd Sunday	Saturday BCP Evening Prayer (30@4:30)	9am Holy Communion	10:30am Service of the Word
3 rd Sunday	9am Holy Communion	<i>Join with St Giles</i>	10:30am Holy Communion
4 th Sunday	<i>Join with St Nicholas</i>	9am Holy Communion	8am BCP Holy Communion 10:30am Morning Prayer

Where there is a 5th Sunday in the month (4 every year), we alternate a Benefice Service at each of the parishes. During the Summer Holidays, we move to one, weekly, Holy Communion Service which rotates around the Benefice.

The services offered across the Benefice include: Book of Common Prayer – Holy Communion; Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer; Celtic Style Holy Communion; Service of the Word; Reflective Services and Common Worship Morning Prayer plus Parade and Civic services.

The table below shows the current numbers of people who have chosen to be included on the church electoral rolls. Clearly, in the context of the large (and increasing) Sawtry population and the much smaller Holme and Glatton populations (a combined ~8,500), the growth potential is immense and forms the backdrop of our outreach.

Church Electoral Rolls			
	St Giles	St Nicholas	All Saints
2023	11	22	64
2024	16	25	62

All Saints

10:30am services remain a hybrid offering of both in person and live zoom broadcast. Through Zoom, we have retained a regular worshipping community and continue to seek ways to proactively support that more isolated congregation's spiritual growth.

Our inclusive hospitality is found across the Benefice with the All Saints 10.30am service focusing particularly on families and young people. A consistent feature of this service is 'Young at Heart', a specific activity aimed at the younger members of the congregation (but all are invited to participate) which is often a craft activity linked to the theme of the sermon with a time to share together towards the end of the service.

Morning prayer is also held in All Saints every Monday morning at 9.30am. Leadership of this rotates between being clergy and lay led.

St Nicholas



Harvest Festival Service at St Nicholas

Typically, two, traditionally styled 9am Eucharist services are held each month and the church is also a focal point for several special services such as:

Maundy Thursday Service - Marking the night of the last supper and the washing of the disciples' feet in love, this has become a profound and simple service as part of our Easter worship ending with the stripping of the altar and a silent/dark departure.

Harvest Service & Lunch - The Benefice meets for a harvest service (tailored towards our younger members), collecting produce and food to show gratitude for farmers while supporting those in need through Sawtry Caresco. Afterwards, we celebrate our fellowship over a harvest lunch at the Village Hall.

Morning BCP Service and Afternoon Praise - In the summer months we have added the occasional BCP Morning Prayer (9am) and an informal Evening (4pm) Prayer and Praise service. However, we are wary of splitting our small congregations between Glatton and Holme as we alternate between the two parish 9am services.

Bible Study

We hold a weekly small bible study group to deepen our discipleship through creative, collaborative study opportunities. We have hosted an Alpha course in the Sawtry Greystones Pub. The 'Monday Night Pub Church' continues to be a place where honest conversation, community and faith intersect church; the landlord and landlady have been very welcoming and we have a great relationship established for continued future activities.

Shared Study

Our 2024 Lent Bible Study, held in partnership with the Methodist Church was based on The Greatest Showman and our 2024 Advent study used the film Scrooge, with both offering rich spaces for spiritual exploration and growth.

Pop-Up Cinema

Joining with the Methodist church, All Saints is well known for holding their 'Pop-Up cinema used for creative discussion groups (with an enticing array of great refreshments, popcorn and chocolates!). Among the many recent highlights was our 2024 Christmas Pop-Up Cinema, featuring The Snowman, The Snowman and the Snowdog, and The Grinch, which brought together over 100 people for a fun and festive celebration of community and Christmas joy.

Children / Youth Work

Little Saints



Little Saints continues to thrive, with an average weekly attendance now exceeding 50 children and adults!

This provides insight to support the Mums/Dads and is feeding into our Sunday worship.

Youth Space

Youth Space is led by clergy and church volunteers most Sunday evenings. It has doubled in size, growing from an average of 6 to 12 young people and it continues to gain momentum. We are grateful to Launchpad, a diocese lead course, which has resourced and supported this area of ministry.

Cheeky Pandas

Cheeky Pandas TV was created by the Church of England providing youthful and engaging explanation of the Bible through animation. It has become a regular feature to the 10:30am services and provided a new avenue in our worship.

We now regularly welcome 11 children to our All Saints 10:30am Sunday service, a joyful sign of a growing intergenerational worshipping community.



Summer Holiday Club

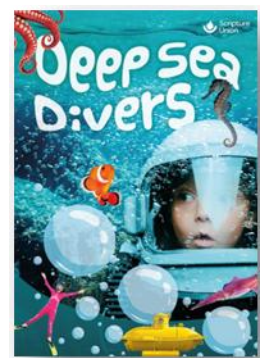


The Benefice joins the Sawtry Light Factory, which is held in the Methodist Church building.

This is an annual project run by the churches of Sawtry since 2001

The summer holiday club is attended by some 30+ children.

<http://www.sawtrylightfactory.uk/>



Building Out (To make Christ known)

Schools

We continue to enjoy strong and fruitful relationships with all local schools (Holme C of E Primary Academy; Sawtry Infant; Sawtry Junior Academy; Sawtry Village Academy), creating opportunities to serve and share the gospel through assemblies, seasonal events and pastoral presence (see pen pictures at Appendix C).

Socials

Each Church holds distinct fund-raising socials in addition to the annual October Gift Days during the season of harvest. St Nicholas is blessed by being in the centre of the village and has established regular events hosted in the adjacent Village Hall (a new Village Hall is currently being built!).

Links with Community Groups

Sawtry Care and Resource Organisation (Caresco)

Caresco provides support for a wide range of local social and community needs. Their core funding is partly provided by the County Social Services Department, with the balance coming from local fund-raising activities and charitable contributions from the local churches and businesses.



Light Project

The churches have supported the Light Project in Peterborough which aims to be a truly city focused/city change charity providing a range of projects (Street Chaplaincy, Peer Advocacy, Homeless Health Hub, Peterborough Night Shelter).

Community

There are many clubs and organisations within Sawtry, too numerous to be detailed here. The bi-monthly publication 'Sawtry Eye' is the best source of local community news and it can be viewed at: www.caresco.org.uk

Coffee Ark

Coffee Ark was founded out of the missional values of the Fen Edge Churches with a shared desire to be a proactive, compassionate presence within our communities. Coffee Ark has grown from a history of creative mission initiatives and partnership working within the churches.

Emerging from a recognition of growing needs around mental health, isolation and identity, Coffee Ark offers a welcoming, non-judgemental space where people can connect, be heard, and find support.



Independently funded and governed, Coffee Ark works in close partnership with the churches while remaining self-sufficiently sustainable. Its work embodies collaboration, drawing on volunteers and relationships from across the parishes and beyond.

Coffee Ark operates throughout the Benefice as a central point for community interaction and support. Its presence stands as a clear example of the churches' ongoing dedication to promoting wellbeing and wholeness among local residents. By providing a welcoming and accessible environment, Coffee Ark has established itself as a vital resource for mission work, allowing the churches to reach out to individuals who might not otherwise engage with traditional church services.

Through consistent engagement, Coffee Ark nurtures meaningful relationships that are built on trust and hope. These connections help to strengthen the sense of community, offering support to those who may feel isolated or uncertain. At its core, Coffee Ark is a testament to the power of faith in action. It demonstrates how practical expressions of care and compassion can foster resilience within the community, bridge existing divides, and make the presence of Christ tangible in the everyday life of the Fen Edge area.

The vision of the Coffee Ark can be found @ <https://www.elydiocese.org/what-is-coffee-ark.php>

Social Media

All the benefice villages utilise social media platforms to disseminate information regarding church activities and events. Facebook serves as a particularly effective channel, with each village within the parishes maintaining well-managed and regulated Facebook pages. For further information, search Facebook for 'Sawtry Village Life', 'Sawtry Scene', 'Glatton Village', 'Holme Village', and 'Conington Village'.

Additionally, every two months the Benefice publishes details of services and events in the Sawtry Eye.

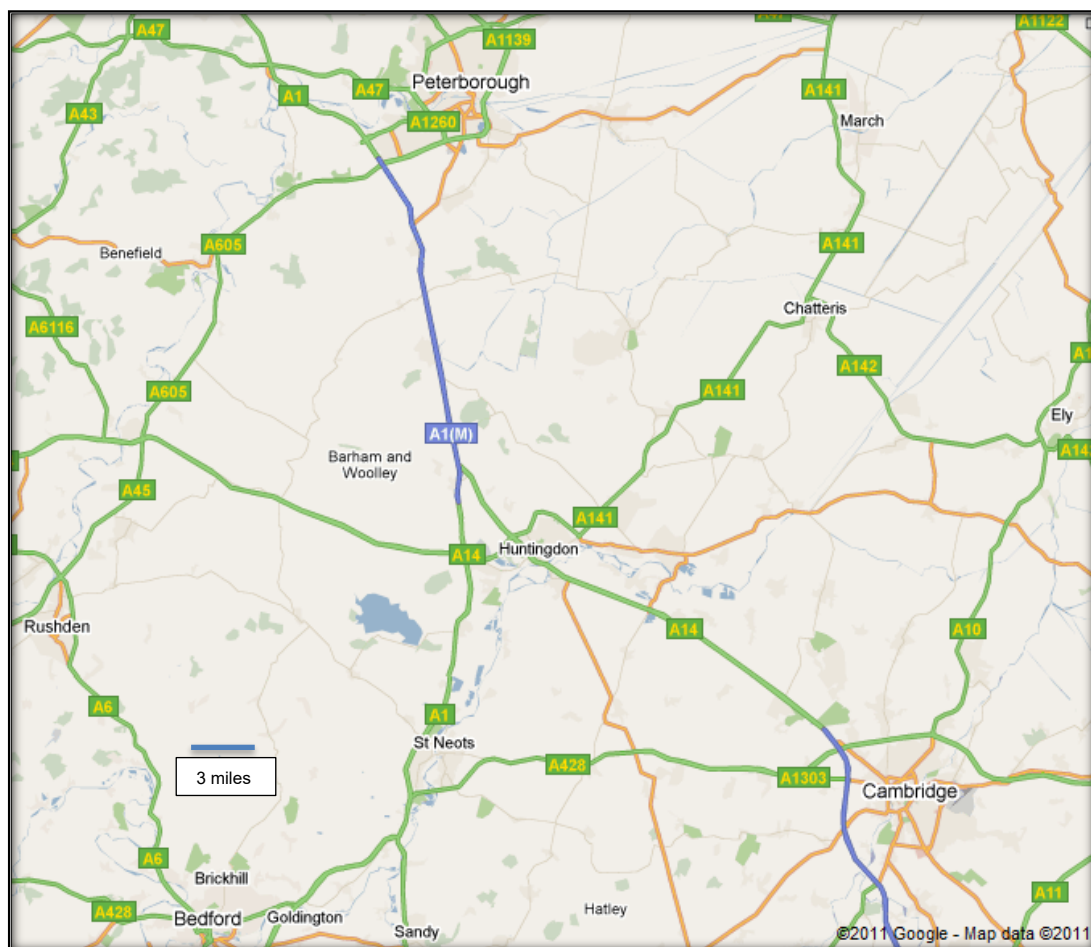
Attractive Location

Appendix A

Sawtry is located halfway between the city of Peterborough and the town of Huntingdon. Other nearby villages include Glatton, Alconbury, Holme, Conington, Yaxley and Stilton.

Being situated near the A1(M), it is a sought-after location for commuters with excellent access by both rail (Peterborough / Huntingdon stations) and road. The Benefice is:

- Approximately 6 miles north of the much-improved east/west A14.
- A fifty-minute drive to both Stansted and Luton airports.
- An hour train journey to London via either Peterborough or Huntingdon stations.
- Near to the city of Cambridge and its historic university.
- About 50 minutes to the cathedral city of Ely (where our Ely Diocesan departmental staff are located).
- Twenty minutes from the market town of Stamford lauded for its beautiful Georgian architecture and abundance of listed buildings.
- Near also to the county of Norfolk and its inspiring east-coast and Sandringham attractions.



**Sawtry, Glatton, Holme & Conington locations
with respect to Peterborough, Huntingdon and Cambridge**

Sawtry's origins date back to Roman times. Located at the boundary of Fenland, the village is bordered by woodland to the west and southwest, with the Fens lying to the east. The region is predominantly agricultural, complemented by pockets of light industry on its periphery and a prosperous business estate.

The village population reached 5,426 according to the 2021 census, reflecting significant growth over the past thirty years. This increase is largely attributable to the development of new residential estates, with additional permissions granted for further expansion in the coming years.



Being located next to the A1 and having excellent local facilities, as outlined below, Sawtry attracts a broad mix of younger families and older residents.

Further details, including the 2021 Census data, can be found here: <https://sawtry.parish.uk/>

A church has stood on the site of All Saints for many centuries. The present building was finished in 1880 and incorporates stone from earlier churches, including material from Sawtry Abbey, which was located across the A1. Several other historical artifacts were also moved to the church.

In recent years, the church has become a prominent part of village life, hosting events like 'Pub Church' on Monday evenings (at The Greystones Pub), Little Saints at the Methodist Church Hall and Coffee Ark, as well as seasonal activities at The Greystones. The church is also present at events such as the Sawtry Carnival and Sawtry Show. Community members have generously assisted with maintaining the churchyard and we truly appreciate their enthusiastic support.

The village itself has many facilities and continues to grow with new housing developments and small business work opportunities:

Housing - As well as private properties, there are several Housing Association homes for families and older people. Mellor's Court provides Sheltered Accommodation for up to thirty residents and Hill View is a sixteen-bed care home for older people.

Health - 'Wellside Surgery' provides healthcare for residents of Sawtry and many outlying villages. They offer a range of healthcare services and special clinics. 'Sawtry Dental' provides private dental services.

Sawtry Community Centre - The Community Centre was refurbished in 2018 and houses the local library and other community groups and activities.

Caresco - Caresco is a Sawtry-based charity which offers help and social opportunities to vulnerable groups in Sawtry and beyond. They run a local charity shop and food bank.

Education - There is educational provision from pre-school to A-level within the village itself:

Buttons and Bows – Provides preschool opportunities and was rated ‘Outstanding’ in all areas in their most recent published Ofsted report.

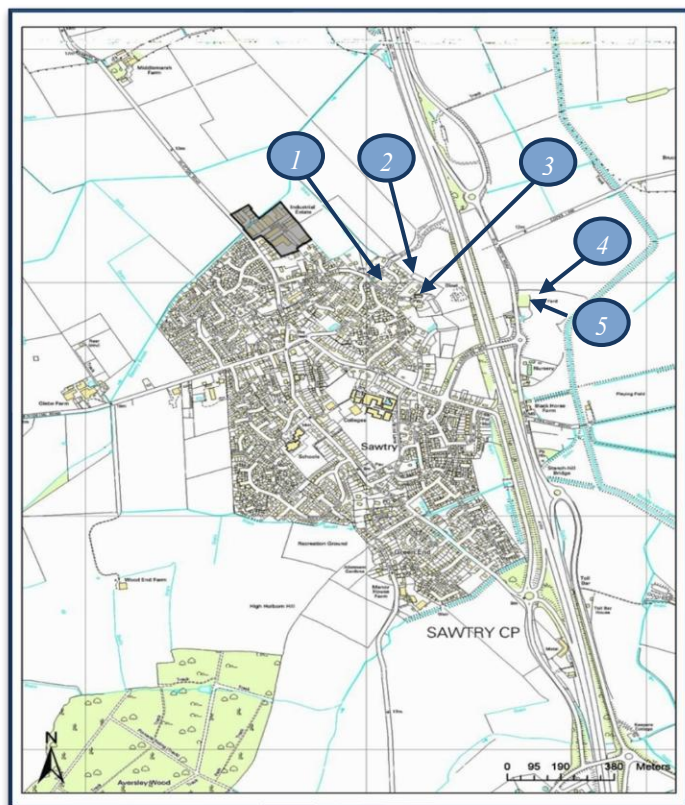
Sawtry Infant School – It has an Ofsted rating of ‘Good’. Situated in the heart of the village, this is a valued asset which supports children well at the start of their education journey. Whilst not a church school, the team have welcomed clergy to their assemblies and celebrate some Christian festivals at All Saints’.

Sawtry Junior Academy – It has an Ofsted rating of ‘Good’. Located next to the Infant School, the Junior Academy provides continuity for the children of the village. It is part of the Meridian Trust, and the school has strong values which the children are encouraged to follow and is well respected in the village. Again, whilst not being a Christian school they are happy to have links to the church and use All Saints to enhance their faith and local history studies.

Sawtry Village Academy – Is also part of the Meridian Trust and occupies a large site off Fen Lane. It has an Ofsted rating of ‘Good’. It has capacity for around 1,200 pupils and provides education for the children of Sawtry, Alconbury to the south and Stilton to the North. The team at the Village Academy has also welcomed input from All Saints and has worked with Coffee Ark to provide some work experience opportunities for the students.

Churches Together

Sawtry is also served by a Methodist Church. The local Roman Catholic congregation, which previously gathered at the Women’s Institute Hall on Sunday mornings, now meets in Peterborough. Both the Methodist Church and parish churches frequently collaborate, holding joint services for certain celebrations during the year. One significant collaborative initiative is the annual summer holiday club.



Map of Sawtry

Key

1. The Rectory
2. Cemetery for cremation internments
3. All Saints Church
4. The Parish Cemetery
5. Closed Cemetery of St Andrews

Employment

Sawtry is mainly known as a commuter village, with many residents working in places like Huntingdon and Peterborough - each about 10 miles away - as well as at nearby United States Air Force (USAF) and Royal Air Force bases. Some travel further to London, which is just a 45-minute train ride from Peterborough, or to Cambridge.

Education is among the area's biggest employers. The local industrial estate has been expanding gradually, providing jobs for people in the community.

Within the village, there are a variety of shops: a small supermarket, two minimarkets, hairdressers, newsagents, solicitors, estate agents, a post office and two restaurants that also offer take-away services. Sawtry also features two pubs (The Greystones and The Bell) which serve food. The Bell includes a Nepalese Restaurant and takeaway.

Expansion in the Sawtry Parish

Recent years have seen significant development and investment in Sawtry, particularly in the areas of education and housing. On the educational campuses, expansion projects have played a central role in enhancing learning environments and facilities for students. Notably, a new science block has been constructed, providing state-of-the-art resources for science education.

Additionally, a major investment of £750,000 from the Council has funded the creation of new classrooms for the infant school, strengthening the infrastructure for early years education. The Village Academy has also benefited from these improvements, with enhanced sporting facilities that now include a swimming pool and a comprehensive sports hall complex. These upgrades ensure that students have access to a broad range of physical education opportunities, supporting both health and personal development.

Beyond the educational sector, economic growth in Sawtry is evident from the construction of new industrial units. These units, located adjacent to St Andrews Cemetery on the Old Great North Road, contribute to local employment opportunities and the economic vitality of the community. Residential development has likewise been a prominent feature of Sawtry's recent growth. Over the past few years, more than 250 new houses have been built, accommodating the needs of a growing population. This trend continues, with two further housing developments - comprising 75 and 54 houses - currently under construction.

Looking ahead, planning permission has been granted for a substantial 340-home development situated on Glatton Road as you leave Sawtry. This project will provide 204 open market homes and 136 affordable homes, responding to the diverse housing needs of the community. The development is designed with community well-being in mind, featuring a new primary school, public open space, and a dedicated play area, all of which will enhance the quality of life for current and future residents.

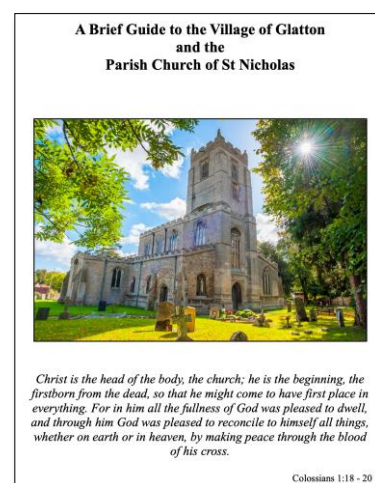
St Nicholas Church (Glatton) Parish



Glatton is a small village situated one mile west of the A1(M) approximately halfway between Huntingdon and Peterborough.

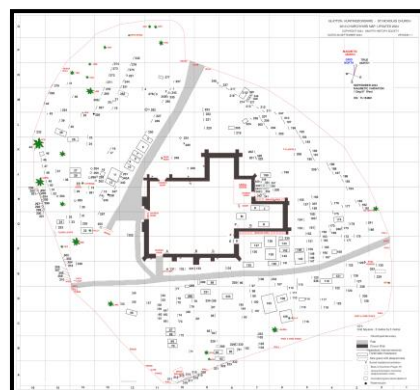
The Parish boundary extends across the A1, approaching Holme village to the east. While the North, West, and South stretch into rolling countryside, the eastern edge is bordered by the Fens. The village lies at the southernmost point of the Parish and is known as both 'the village in the valley' and the 'village of trees'.

The history of St Nicholas church has been richly captured by one of the congregation and a local photographer, resident in the village, resulting in a Church Brochure and stunning display; these are available at the back of the church for the benefit of visitors. The church, which is left open most days, is situated in a conservation area along with several listed items in the village – comprising the church, some headstones and some houses.



We are very grateful to the Sawtry Historic Society for mapping and photographing all our graveyard monuments in 2010 and subsequently updating the map positions in September 2024 (see picture).

We are enriched by a team of generous volunteers who help to keep the open graveyard lawn regularly mowed. Also, to one villager who frequently climbs the spiral stone staircase of 56 steps (one of which is carved with the date 1687) to maintain the clock which dates from before 1885. Both clock and mower volunteers have clearly joined a demanding 'Glatton fitness programme'!



The Parish

The village is organized around a central crossroads, with the church positioned adjacent to this intersection and directly across from the Village Hall. The area features numerous thatched and partially timbered residences, primarily constructed in the seventeenth century. The Addison Arms public house, originating from the eighteenth century and now including a restaurant, exemplifies architecture of the period with shaped gables and a tiled roof.



New village Hall under construction

The Village Hall (currently being rebuilt) hosts many social gatherings and evening events for the village and church. It offers an excellent space where both the church and local community can connect and take part in activities together.

Glatton is governed by a Parish Council, with local civil authorities being Huntingdon District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council. The parish spans 2,176 acres, with agriculture as its main industry. Of the 320 residents, some are professionals commuting to

Peterborough, Huntingdon, or London. The village also has several retirees and a small number of young families. Village children attend various schools, though the designated ones are located in Sawtry and Holme. Any new development within the village is restricted to infill projects according to the Huntingdon District Plan.

Community

The social activities run by the PCC are very popular in drawing the church and village together; these events include New Year Lunch, Quiz Nights and Harvest Lunch. The church has also hosted occasional musical concerts, a recent art exhibition and the Coffee Ark while the Village Hall is being rebuilt. It is hoped to hold more such events in the future.



A concert by internationally acclaimed concert pianist Martin Cousin, playing music written by the late Author, Beverley Nichols, a former resident of Glatton.



St Nicholas Singing Group - Practising for the Christmas Carol Service.



Art Exhibition – “Stories of the Fen Edge Through Art”

St Giles (Holme) Parish

The parish of Holme with Conington covers a large rural area to the east of Holme Village. The population of the village is roughly 700, in around 270 houses. The current Huntingdonshire development plan is set to increase the number of houses by 50%.

The parish produces its own magazine, 'Parish News', published 10 times a year and funded by the Reading Room Trust. It is distributed, free of charge, to every house in the village and some beyond.



Facilities The village facilities include:

Holme Church of England Primary Academy (a school covenant school)

- is now a Primary Academy with Stilton School. It has close ties with the church, forged by both our previous Rector and a past member of the congregation. The Rector of Stilton Group of Churches also serves on the Governing Board of both Holme and Stilton Primary schools. The school hold assemblies in church fortnightly and in the school when the weather is inclement. The Rector is an ex-officio member of the Governing Body. Most of the children go up to Sawtry Academy after year 6. See: <https://holme.demat.org.uk/english>



Holme Fen - a 657-acre nature reserve designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest and managed by Natural England. Of note are the Holme Fen Posts, erected in 1848 to record the peat shrinkage, just before Whittlesey Mere was drained.

Holmewood Hall - is now a wedding venue, part of the Country House Weddings group. We do have couples, having their reception at the Hall, who forge a qualifying connection and marry in the church.

Peterborough Business Airport – Originally constructed by American forces towards the end of the Second World War, this airfield is now home to several established businesses. The airport offers comprehensive flight training services and features a café, open from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm, serving coffee, cakes, afternoon tea, and light meals.

The Admiral Wells - reputed to be the lowest pub (below sea level) in England, is very popular and serves excellent food.

The Village Hall - is also home to the Pre-School. The Hall is well equipped and hosts the Short Mat bowls, the youth club, parish council meetings, and other Holme and Conington events.

The church

St Giles originally served as a medieval chapel of ease for Glatton church before becoming independent in 1857. After strong winds destroyed the roof, Edward Browning of Stamford rebuilt the chapel in 1860. Elements of the original medieval structure, such as the pillars, arches, and nave responds, remain part of the current church.

At the turn of the 20th century the vicar, George Broke, sought to serve a large rural parish, especially during winter months, by commissioning a barge as a floating church. Named the 'Fen Ark' and dedicated to St Withberga, it provided services to the rural community from 1897 to 1904 and subsequently inspired the **Coffee Ark**. Two small pews, originally St Withberga's choir stalls, can be found on the north side of St Giles Church.

Services include 9am holy communion on the first and the third Sundays of the month. A said BCP evensong on the second (can be the first) Saturday of the month, called 30@4:30, is also held in the church.



Candlelit Carol Service

The most popular service is Candlelit Carols at 6pm on Christmas Eve, attended by over 100 in the church. Acts of Remembrance are held at both All Saints, Conington and St Giles Holme on Remembrance Sunday.

The theology at St Giles is more traditional hymns and liturgy than contemporary evangelical. Average attendance for communion over the last year (Nov '24 – Oct '25) was 12. In that time, there have been 2 baptisms, 3 weddings and 2 funerals. An annual Gift Day is held in September.

The church lies on the Kettering Leg, of the Student Cross (now Pilgrim Cross) route and supplies breakfast on the Monday morning of Holy week.

The Quinquennial inspection took place earlier this autumn. Unfortunately, this identified that repair work is required on the church roof and on the drainage system from the roof.

The churchyard is now closed and maintained by the local council. A new path has recently been laid.



Students walking the Pilgrim Cross route



All Saints Church, Conington

The ecclesiastical parish encompasses two civil parishes, Holme and Conington.

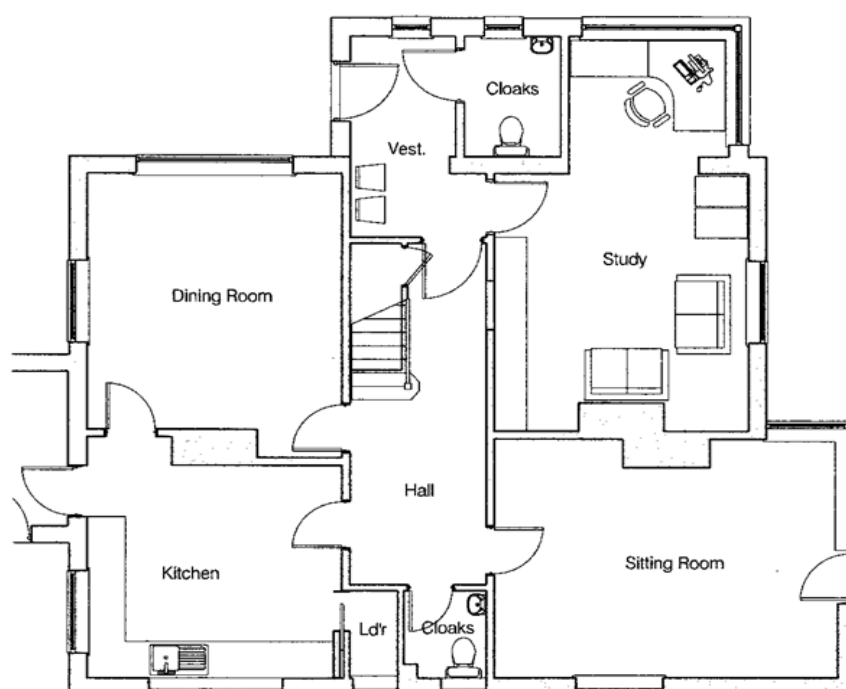
All Saints in Conington is in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust. St Giles holds two annual services in Conington, in May and September.

The Rectory was built in 1963 and faces South-West on a half-acre plot. The grounds are well maintained mainly laid to lawn with flower beds and a vegetable plot. There is a pond and various fruit trees within the area. A gas boiler centrally heats the house with radiators in all rooms. The windows are double glazed with UPVC frames.

Rectory Front Elevation and External Garden Views



Rectory Ground Floor Plan



Ground Floor Accommodation

The ground floor includes an entrance hall that provides access to a cloakroom / WC with facilities for disabled users. There is also a sitting room (3.96m by 5.1m) equipped with gas fire provisions and patio doors leading to the garden. A dining room (4.55m x 4.1m). A study with office/meeting area with built-in bookshelves. A kitchen (3.5m x 3.96m) with walk-in larder and adjoining utility room.

The main hall includes a family cloakroom with WC and coat storage.



Hall



Lounge



Breakfast Room & Kitchen



Office Study and Meeting Area



Dining Room

First Floor Accommodation

The stairs and landing run through the middle of the house. On the landing there is an airing cupboard and the loft is accessible by a built-in ladder.

The house has four bedrooms of good proportions with the master bedroom being (3.9m x 4.2m) incorporating an ensuite facility containing a WC, hand basin and shower cubical.

Bedroom 2 (3.9m x 3.9m) is carpeted and has a built-in double wardrobe.

Bedroom 3 (3.9m x 3.6m) is carpeted and has a built-in double wardrobe.

Bedroom 4 (3.3m x 3.1m) is carpeted and has a built-in sink unit.

The family bathroom incorporates a full-length bath, shower cubicle, sink and WC.

