

St Matthew, Sutton Bridge Lincolnshire



St Matthew's, Sutton Bridge

0.5 Interim Priest in Charge of St Matthew's Sutton Bridge

We invite applications from priests with an enthusiasm for rural ministry, who want to see the church making a real difference in an area of distinct social need in this parish on the Lincolnshire/Norfolk border.

This 0.5 post is the equivalent of Sundays plus 3 other days per week. The diocese has agreed to a 2 year interim post, to cover the transition to a new pattern of deployment that will be part of the diocesan vision for **Resourcing a Sustainable Church**. The postholder would be expected to help the parish work towards this vision and take an active part in discussions and decision making about how this is implemented within the deanery.

There is scope, (but no requirement as such) for adding into this post the additional responsibility of becoming the Deanery Lay Training Officer – if this is you, we would like you to have a heart for the nurturing of lay vocations and experience and enjoyment of facilitating Adult Education.

An enhanced DBS check is required and will need to be in place prior to the appointment.

Full expenses of office will be reimbursed. It is expected that the priest will take their time off as well as their annual pro rata holiday entitlement. The importance of study leave, Spiritual Direction and an annual retreat is recognised. They will be encouraged to use this provision to enhance their ministry and our own.

For further information or an informal conversation about this post please contact:

The Ven Justine Allain Chapman (Archdeacon of Boston) – archdeacon.boston@lincoln.snglican.org
Tel - 01522 504039

or Rev'd Canon Rosamund Seal (Rural Dean of Elloe East) – rosamund.seal@btinternet.com
Tel – 01406 424989

Closing Date: Wednesday December 16 , 2020

Interview Date: Wednesday January 20, 2021

For Further information about Resourcing Sustainable Church please speak to the Archdeacon or Rural Dean – details above.

Job Specification/Personal Profile

This post represents an opportunity to join the deanery of Elloe East at a time of renewed optimism and hope for the future and to help contribute to shaping the future of both the benefice and the deanery as part of the diocesan vision for Resourcing a Sustainable Church. St Matthew's Sutton Bridge has traditionally been part of the Central Anglican tradition, but it has also experienced and enjoyed a less formal and more evangelical form of worship in recent years. Though the parish would like someone who is comfortable with using Common Worship liturgies, churchmanship is far less important to them than getting the right priest with the right gifts for the job.

There are significant challenges here. Some families have lived here for generations, some older people have retired here because of the relatively low cost of housing. There is a lot of social housing, a high number of single parent families, a significant number of migrant workers who work in the food processing industries and significantly low aspirations among many of its young people.

This is a post for a mission-focused parish priest, with a heart for the community, and an opportunity to make a real difference and has considerable scope for development.

We are looking for a person of prayer who will:

- Make themselves known in the community and communicate well with people of all ages and backgrounds.
- Lead, enable and encourage us to develop a vision for our future.
- Value the diversity in our congregation and discern and develop their gifts for active roles in the life of the church.
- Enjoy a variety of worship - traditional, modern and informal.
- Have good organisational and IT skills.
..... and a sense of humour!

And, who, if they become the Deanery Lay Training Officer has:

- An enthusiasm for identifying, supporting and encouraging lay people in their ministry.
- Proven experience of adult education and facilitation skills.

What we can offer:

- A warm and friendly welcome.
- A willing bunch of lay people who enthusiastically organize regular activities and events.
- A congregation who, as well as valuing tradition and a regular Eucharist, are open to new initiatives.
- A Church building which is open every day.
- A willingness to 'soldier on'.
- A building and facilities which are ripe for more flexible community use.
- Full administrative support at a deanery level.

We will support our new priest by:

- Welcoming you into our church family.
- Supporting you and ministering alongside you whenever we can.
- Supporting your time off and holidays.
- Organising the fund-raising and social events so that you don't have to.

- Holding you in our prayers.
- Offering a supportive deanery that shares its gifts and enthusiasms.

Responsibility for Lay Training (Can be added into the post if this is something you are interested in)

Since 2008, the deanery of Elloe East has been proactive in using diocesan courses to train Authorised Lay Ministers using local tutors. There are 25 Authorised Lay Ministers in the deanery covering nearly all the parishes, some very active and some less so. Some regularly lead non-eucharistic worship and others lead worship in care homes, lead study groups, provide pastoral care in the parishes and take collective worship in schools.

Unfortunately, the diocesan lay training initiative got lost for a few years, and as a deanery we have struggled to build on and maintain our excellent previous record due to a lack of good resources and local leadership. However, 2 years ago the diocese appointed a new Warden of Lay Ministry - Dr Sally Buck. She has reviewed the provision of lay training and launched a new series of foundation and follow up courses which began to be rolled out to the deaneries in early 2020 ready to train the next tranche of recruits. A licensed Lay Reader and deanery ordinand is currently facilitating the new Foundation course for 10 new deanery participants, but we will need someone to take over that role once she is ordained in 2021 and moves to a FT curacy elsewhere.

Alongside their parish responsibilities, the new incumbent may be willing to give the equivalent of half a day a week as our Deanery Lay Training Officer.

We envisage the responsibilities for this will involve the following

- Liaising with the Warden of Lay Ministry and being her point of contact with the deanery.
- Helping the deanery identify, train and nurture existing and new ALMs.
- Enabling the facilitation of training courses and develop a rolling program of foundation training and workshops, using the excellent new resources provided by the diocese.
- Provide bespoke training events for lay people in areas of identified need.
- There is also the possibility of developing a role as a local vocations advisor working in partnership with the Diocesan Director of Ordinands
- Anything else that you can contribute that will maximise the use of your skills.

Accommodation.



The Vicarage is situated in the centre of Sutton Bridge, 200yds from the church. There is a garden in front with parking spaces and garage to the side and an attractive large enclosed rear garden with sheds. The house has an entrance porch and hallway, a large lounge with patio doors leading to the rear garden. Off the hallway there is also a downstairs cloakroom, a study, a dining room and a kitchen which leads to a utility room and outside toilet. Upstairs are 4 bedrooms, a box room/nursery and a separate toilet and bathroom. The property is fitted with a comprehensive alarm system.

Introduction to the area.



The parish of Sutton Bridge is in the south-east corner of Lincolnshire in the district of South Holland. The area is largely reclaimed from the sea, flat and criss-crossed with a network of drainage channels, dykes and roads. It is located on the border with Norfolk to the East and Cambridgeshire to the South.

The wide horizons offer both spectacular sunsets and sunrises. A huge variety of food crops, bulbs and flowers are grown in the fertile fields. There is plenty of wildlife in the fields and waterways, and the dykes and the marshlands of The Wash are a bird watcher's paradise. The flat landscape makes cycling easy and there are lovely walks (with or without a dog) out on the marshes which are peaceful and soul-restoring.

There are many surrounding historic sites, towns and villages. Spalding is the principal town in the district with many Georgian houses, shops and a market. Tree-lined footpaths follow the River Welland and a water taxi boat runs between the river and Springfields Shopping Outlet on the edge of the town. The sea coast, including the lovely resorts of North Norfolk, is within easy reach in 30 minutes or so by car.



It is a rural community with increasing unemployment, and much of the work low paid. Some are employed in farming and the large number of food processing industries in the area, whilst other people commute to the surrounding larger towns. Many of the newcomers, who are retired, come from the south chiefly because the housing is more affordable and they have found a warm welcome from the people of the Fens. As an area previously renowned for growing tulips, there are a number of spectacular and very well-supported church flower festivals in the South Holland area.

Peter Scott Lighthouse

Local Facilities and Communications

Long Sutton 3 miles
Wisbech 9 miles
King's Lynn 9 miles
Holbeach 10 miles
Spalding 18 miles
Boston 24 miles
Peterborough 30 miles
Lincoln 52 miles
Cambridge 55 miles
Norwich 60 miles

Medical Care: The Suttons Medical Group has Health Centres in Sutton Bridge and in the adjacent market town of Long Sutton. There are chemists in Long Sutton and Sutton Bridge. The Health Centres also have pharmacies for patients who do not have easy access to the dispensing chemists.

NHS hospitals are the Queen Elizabeth in King's Lynn, the Pilgrim Hospital in Boston, Johnson Community Hospital in Spalding, Peterborough City Hospital and the Fitzwilliam in Peterborough - all within easy reach. In Wisbech there is the North Cambridgeshire Hospital, a satellite of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, and in Holbeach there is a Cottage Hospital which is run by a local charitable trust and offers hospice and respite care as well as long term care for the elderly.

Education: Westmere Community Primary school in Sutton Bridge (Ofsted rated Good) has 200 pupils. Lincolnshire still maintains a selective system at 11+ and pupils travel into Spalding Grammar School (for boys) and Spalding High School (for girls). Other local Secondary Schools are the Spalding Academy in Spalding, the University of Lincoln Academy in Long Sutton and the University of Lincoln Academy in Holbeach. Some pupils from Sutton Bridge also attend the comprehensive St Clements High School in Terrington St Clement, Norfolk (9 miles). There is also an independent fee-paying Grammar School in Wisbech, catering for children up to age 18 with an infant section for age 4+.

Communications: Apart from the A17, which by-passes Sutton Bridge, the roads are largely rural and used by agricultural, domestic and an increasing amount of commercial traffic serving the local food producing industry.

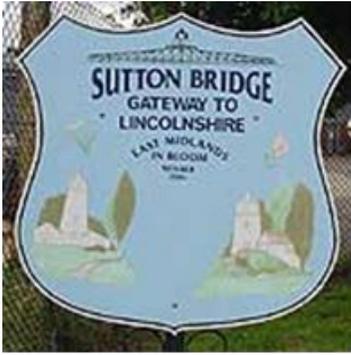
Rail connections to London and the Midlands are from King's Lynn, Spalding and Peterborough. The journey to King's Cross takes 55 minutes from Peterborough and 1 hour 50 minutes from Kings Lynn. Local bus services run regularly between Spalding and King's Lynn. There is also a bus service to Wisbech and from Wisbech on to Peterborough.

The city centres of Peterborough, Lincoln, Cambridge and Norwich are within reach by road. There are good shopping areas in Spalding, Boston and King's Lynn. For more immediate needs, Long Sutton provides a range of shops, banking, dentistry, a library and a Friday market.



The swing bridge across the River Nene at Sutton Bridge

Sutton Bridge



Sutton Bridge likes to think of itself as a small town and is the first community to be reached in Lincolnshire when approaching from the south-east along the A17 trunk road. Wingland is a small rural part of the parish that lies on the eastern side of the historical swing bridge spanning the River Nene. The population is growing and currently stands at 4,100. There is a thriving modern 62 acre dry cargo port and warehouse facility alongside the Nene and also a marina. There are food processing industries, haulage companies, light engineering works, horticulture and farming here. There is a power station located on the east bank and control facilities for the South Holland Main Drain, which empties into the River

Nene. There are a wealth of associations and sporting clubs with their associated facilities. The town has a pharmacy, post office, shops, garage, inns and restaurants. There is a residential home for the elderly (Nene Lodge), and a modern Health Centre that serves Sutton Bridge and the surrounding area.

The Curlew Centre is a newly built community hall which provides accommodation for the Parish Council plus outreach facilities for the police, Citizens Advice and a library, plus a range of social and sporting clubs and also a Sunday afternoon outreach group from Kings Lynn Christian Fellowship. There was briefly a youth club operating from the Curlew Centre but there are now plans for a purpose-built facility. There are several local associations including the Nene Men's Group and the St Matthew's Community Centre Befrienders Group. The parish hosts one night of the northern legs of the Walsingham Student Cross in Holy Week at the Centre, where they are offered fish and chips and may camp overnight. There is a short service for them the following morning.



Westmere Community Primary School, part of the Griffin Foundation which also includes two small rural schools, was rated Good by Ofsted in 2015. It describes its children as 'some of the most fantastic you could ever wish to meet, full of enthusiasm and with a true love of learning.' The school focuses on experiential learning due to the limited experiences many of the children have on entry. The previous incumbent was chair of the school governors.

Parts of Sutton Bridge are seriously deprived. Using the Indices of Multiple Deprivation, based on economic activity, education, parks and open spaces, housing, health, criminal statistics and rural poverty, Sutton Bridge is ranked as the most deprived area within South Holland District, and its

rural surrounds ranked twelfth. There are significant numbers of single parent families and a number of larger families. Aspirations among young people are notably low and some have become disaffected and can, at times, be disruptive. There are, however, good relationships with the local police through the local PCSO, who is well known and respected in the community. These circumstances present significant opportunities for ministry.

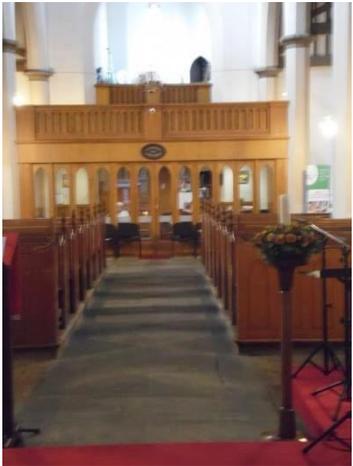
The Church of St. Matthew's, Sutton Bridge



St Matthew's was built in 1841 in Suffolk flint and stone and the 2009 QI indicates that the church is generally in good order and needs only minor works. The heating system has been renewed in recent years and the church is now one of the warmest in the deanery! It has an internal meeting room, the Trinity Room (added in 2006), which has independent heating, a toilet and kitchen facilities and is widely used for community events and church meetings such as: A fortnightly Bible study group, a prayer group, 'Matts Mums,' a weekly parent and toddler group which is



very popular, a monthly coffee morning, a monthly Soup Lunch, Lent & Advent lunches and PCC meetings. During the 2020 lockdown a full-size retractable screen and data projector were installed along with an updated sound system. This has proved of real benefit once the church reopened for worship in July and will make a significant contribution to future mission and possible community usage of the church building in the future. The church has close ties with the Royal Air Forces Association and RAF Holbeach has a bombing range which is situated in the parish and operates training flights over the Wash and the marshes.



The congregation of St Matthews pride themselves on their fundraising abilities, holding several successful social and fundraising activities each year which are well supported by the local community. These include a Spring and Autumn Fair, a Flower Festival in July, an Arts Exhibition over the August bank holiday, plus teas and lunches which are much appreciated by the local community and bring in significant funds.

A Food Bank was established in the church by the last incumbent and is staffed and run by an enthusiastic team of volunteers drawn from the local community. It is open to clients for two hours on a Friday and provided invaluable support to the local community, via the local school, during the Covid 19 lockdown.



St Matthew's Church is very much valued by the local community. The high number of pastoral offices are an indication of the respect that the local community have for their church – even though they may not attend Sunday worship. The excellent support they give to fundraising events shows their willingness for the church to be 'kept going'.

In the recent past a small environmental group was set up to look at ways of developing the diversity of wildlife in the churchyard. They started a nature watch group which involved people from both the congregation and the community. They installed, and still monitor, the swift boxes that were installed in the tower with a grant from the local power station. However the churchyard has reverted to being regularly mown by the Parish Council.

St Matthews has, until recently, always paid the Parish Share in full, but, with the loss of some generous givers has found this a struggle in recent years. The church is, however, supported by generous grants from a local charity, The Mary Bass Trust, towards any major building works.



Soup Lunch in the Trinity Room



Snack time at Matt's Mums

St Matthew's hopes for the future:

- To redress the age balance in the congregation by encouraging more of the village into the church, especially younger members with their children
- To further develop the relationship with the local primary school
- To ensure a regular income
- To develop a pastoral visiting scheme
- To grow in numbers, but also in influence in the local community

Statistics for 2017, 2018, 2019 (The previous incumbent left at the end of Dec 2017)

	2017	2018	2019
Electoral Roll	82	87	48
Usual Sunday attendance	40	31	25
Baptisms	13	9	7
Weddings	7	5	6
Funerals	27 (church) 11(crem)	18 (church) ? (crem)	14 (church) 1 (crem)

Current Worship Pattern during the Vacancy

Under the last incumbent Sutton Bridge was combined with Tydd St Mary and held its services at 9.30 so that Tydd could have a service at 11.00. In 2020 it opted to become a stand-alone parish until such time as further reorganisation is made and has reverted to a 10.00am service.

1st Sunday	10.00 - Morning Praise - <i>Preceded by Breakfast at 9.00</i>
2nd Sunday	10.00 - Sung Eucharist (CW order 1)
3rd Sunday	10.00 - Sung Eucharist (CW order 1)
4th Sunday	10.00 - Sung Eucharist (CW order 1)
5th Sunday	10.00 – Sung Eucharist (CW order 1)
Thursdays	9.30 - Said Communion (CW order 1)

There is a service in the Curlew Centre in Sutton Bridge at 4pm on Sunday afternoons led by a community church from King's Lynn.

The Deanery of Elloe East

The Deanery of Elloe East consists of 18 parishes organised into 6 benefices which, each of which used to have its own incumbent. It is currently staffed by 2 full-time stipendiary clergy, and a 0.5 PT priest. We also have the support of one (OLM) locally ordained priest, who works part time as a hospital chaplain. There are two Readers with PTO and three active retired priests with PTO. There is also a Reader/ordinand who will move away to begin her title curacy in the summer of 2021. The Vicar of Holbeach is the Rural Dean. The clergy chapter meet monthly (except in August) for Morning Prayer, mutual support, creative thinking and to discuss and provide feedback on diocesan initiatives.

The deanery has undergone considerable changes in personnel since 2013 and, building on the good relationships already in place, in 2019 it began re-envisioning the deanery for a sustainable future in 2020 and beyond and developing a new pattern of working collegially together that we hope that you will want to be part of and contribute to. Our vision was to develop Mission Communities of between 2 or 3 groups of benefices with the aim of reducing clergy isolation, sharing our ministry teams (both stipendiary and self-supporting clergy, readers and authorized lay ministers) and our creativity, across each Mission Community and in so doing encouraging collaborative working and building on the natural relationships that exist between communities. During 2020 this work has contributed directly to the work of the diocesan deployment group which is part of the much bigger diocesan vision of **Resourcing a Sustainable Church** (*please contact the Archdeacon or Rural Dean if you want to find out more*)

15 parishes in the deanery (including this benefice) have obtained funding towards administrative costs from a local charitable trust (the Mary Bass Trust) and a Deanery Administrator was appointed in February 2019 on an 18 hour a week contract working Monday – Thursday from 9.00-1.00 (plus two non-contact hours) from an accessible office based in the building used by Holbeach Parish Council. The administrator is responsible for booking in all baptisms, weddings and funerals and ensuring that churches and clergy have all the information they need. She has developed a google diary for each benefice and, now that we have an all singing and dancing copier, she can print magazines, orders of service, colour posters and prepare pew sheets and send out bulk mailings for the parishes. She is proving just the mix of efficiency and friendliness that we had hoped for and is already making the deanery more efficient, reducing the administrative burden on clergy and freeing up clergy time for more active ministry.

The deanery has also been offered a commitment of £20,000 per annum by the same Trust towards the appointment of a Deanery Children's and Youth Worker who will also have some responsibilities within the diocese for facilitating the development of work with children and young people, and we were hopeful that we would have been able to get this appointment up and running during the course of 2020. In anticipation we have already set up and trained a lay team of people to run 'Open the Book' assemblies within our local schools. This has necessarily been delayed until 2021, but there is a still a lot to look forward to.....

The 6 benefices in the deanery and the current Mission Communities are as follows:

The Elloe Stone Parishes – Moulton, Moulton Chapel, Whaplode & Holbeach St Johns	Vacant – Full time post
The Elloe Fen Parishes - Whaplode Drove, Gedney Hill, Sutton St Edmund, Sutton St James + Tydd St Mary (from 2020)	Rev'd Mike Ongyerth – 0.5 interim post
Sutton Bridge (formerly with Tydd St Mary)	Vacant – 0.5 interim post
Holbeach	Rev'd Canon Rosamund Seal - Full time post & Rural Dean
The Mid-Elloe group – Gedney, Fleet, Holbeach St Mark & Holbeach Hurn	Vacant – currently looked after from Holbeach
Long Sutton group – Long Sutton, Lutton & Dawsmere	Rev'd Jonathan Sibley – Full time post

An Interim Minister (a third year curate who had responsibility for the benefice during the course of 2018) offers the following observations about the benefice:

St Matthew's Sutton Bridge

The mixed churchmanship of St Matthews is understood as being a blessing for the life of the church. There are those who understand mission as meeting the needs of the community and to this end the church runs a very well attended weekly drop in, and a monthly soup lunch plus a small but steady Matts Mums group who enjoy Messy Easter and Christmas activities. A lunch for those who are on their own on Christmas day, ran for the first time in 2018.

There are others who understand the importance of deepening faith. There are two lively bible study groups, one during the day and one in the evening plus a very committed prayer group. There are natural evangelists in the congregation who have recently begun to witness to their faith at Baptism services. There is a strong element of the congregation who pastorally support individuals in their own homes. There are environmentalists who have set up swift boxes in the tower, nurture a wildlife area and for the first time in 2018 have organised a wildlife day.

Then there are the faithful, who support initiatives, attend regularly, even when the type of worship is not their preferred style, sing in the choir, polish the brasses and serve on the PCC, pick up wreaths in the church yard, bring cakes when needed for flower festivals and the Arts Festival. There are those that serve at the altar, welcome at the door and so on.

For a regular congregation of 30 to 32 a great deal is done to enrich the life of the parish and the life of the congregation.