

**Minutes of Annual Parochial Church Meeting – held Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2026 at Ditchingham Primary Academy**

Meeting was opened at 7.30pm by Reverend Chris Hutton, welcoming all.

The results of Vestry meetings 2026 electing Churchwardens were confirmed, with Reverend Hutton commissioning ten elected Churchwardens for 2026.

**Alburgh – Keith Donno and Ann Wrench**

**Broome – Liz Tipple and Joe Perry**

**Denton – Janet Skinner and Jean Whipps**

**Ditchingham – no churchwarden**

**Earsham – Brenda Rush and Zoe Sprake**

**Hedenham – Rosie Sethia and Hannah Morris**

The assembled meeting applauded the churchwardens, and Reverend Hutton thanked them for their commitment to their churches and communities. Reverend Hutton also thanked Sally Ellson, who was standing down as Churchwarden after over twenty years in the post and presented her with a gift. Meeting applauded Sally with their thanks.

**Central Visitation** for Redenhall Deanery to take place at Wymondham Abbey on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2026 at 7.00pm.

**APCM together –**

1. **Attendance & Apologies:** Lists available at door to sign in and give apologies for those unable to attend.
2. **Minutes of APCM 2025 –** Minutes available to view at meeting and have been online at Earsham Benefice website. Meeting agreed Minutes a true record and these were signed by Reverend Hutton.
3. **Matters Arising from Minutes 2025 –** no matters arising.
4. **Rector's Report/Ramble 2026 –**

Welcome to this year's rector's ramble and I thought I would start by giving you a little test. Who can name the diocese Vision or Mission Statement?

It is of course - Transformed by Christ: prayerful, pastoral and prophetic.

That that is what we are about as a church. We are in the transformation business. Let me read from Romans Chapter 12:

***12 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God – this is your true and proper worship. <sup>2</sup> Do not***

*conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

*<sup>3</sup>For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. <sup>4</sup>For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, <sup>5</sup>so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. <sup>6</sup>We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your<sup>[a]</sup> faith; <sup>7</sup>if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; <sup>8</sup>if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead,<sup>[b]</sup> do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.*

Paul says: “Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”

In other words, don't just drift along with whatever the culture says matters. Don't let the loudest voices set your values. Instead, be changed from the inside out. Let God reshape how you think—about success, about status, about what a good life looks like.

Because if we're honest, the world around us often says: look after yourself first, build your own platform, make your life about you. But the gospel says something different: your life is found in giving it away.

And that leads straight into the next part. Paul says: ‘don't think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment.’

That's not about putting ourselves down. It's about seeing ourselves clearly. Not inflated, not diminished—just honest. Because pride and insecurity are actually two sides of the same coin: both make everything about us.

Instead, Paul invites us into something healthier: a community where we know who we are, and we know we need each other.

He uses the image of a body. One body, many parts. Each with a different function.

And this is where it gets really practical for a Benefice like ours. Because no one person is the church. No one role carries everything. The church is what happens when all the different gifts, all the different people, come together.

Paul lists some of those gifts: prophesying, serving, teaching, encouraging, giving, leading, showing mercy.

It's not an exhaustive list. It's more like a snapshot. But the point is clear: everyone has something to bring.

Some gifts are visible. Some are quieter. Some happen up front. Others happen behind the scenes. But all of them matter.

So I want to flag two people –  
One not here but was upfront  
One here who was often found doing things behind the scenes.

The 1st person we said goodbye this June, to our curate James who has moved to Durham Cathedral. We had a wonderful send off in June and a marvellous celebration and he is being missed, alongside Lizelke his wife.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> person I want to flag is a retiring churchwarden – Sally – who has done so much over the years. I won't say how long she has been churchwarden at Ditchingham, but we thank her for all the ways she has served that community.

Even though I have singled them out – it is really about the whole body of Christ. It is about each of you have how you serve in your big or small ways.

So at an APCM, when we think about reports and roles and responsibilities, this passage gently shifts the focus. It's not just about filling gaps or keeping things running. It's about being a community where every person is invited to play their part.

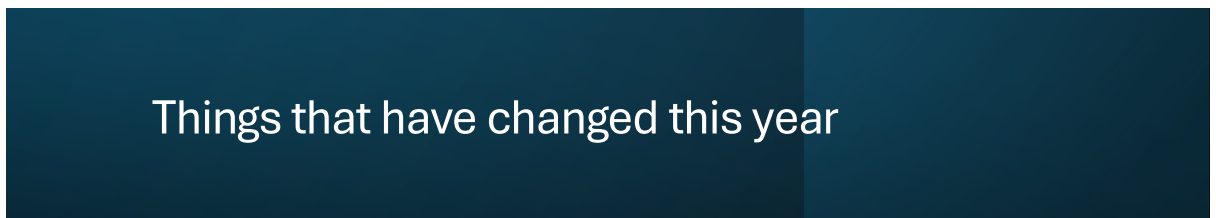
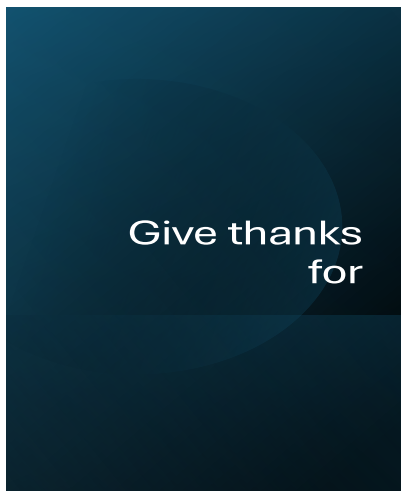
## **5. Deanery Synod Report –**

The Synod met twice during 2025 in Benefices across the Deanery. We continue to be led by our Rural Dean, The Revd Chris Hutton.

The Spring meeting was held on the 4<sup>th</sup> June at Scole Church where we welcomed The Very Revd Dr Andrew Braddock, Dean of Norwich as our speaker. He spoke about how the cathedral supported the parishes and that they would welcome parish visits. He also spoke about how they were aiming to use the cathedral and especially the cathedral close for mission, specially with the numbers who walk through the close each day without coming into the cathedral.

The Autumn meeting was held in the Dickleburgh Church Rooms on the 17<sup>th</sup> November where we welcomed Steph Richardson from Integrate Youth for Christ and Rev'd Richard Lamey, Director for Mission and Ministry. Steph talked to us about the work of the St Benets chaplaincy team that work in many of our local church schools within the Diocese. Richard then came and gave us a talk about the new Diocesan strategy and how it has tried to consult and engage with as many different groups as possible. They have identified 4 main types of churches, Rural, Seaside Town, Market town and Norwich. Each with their own strengths and weaknesses. Richard then encouraged us to get into groups and talk about our own Faith journeys with people we knew.

## 6. School Worker's Report – Caroline Hutton



**01**

Less support for SIAMs as none of our schools are in the window.

**02**

A greater focus on ethos for governing bodies that is stronger than before.

**03**

Brick church has become child lead, with them choosing not only the bible stories but happily sharing prayer requests.

**04**

A further increase in the need for staff pastoral support.

## Where do we need prayer!

This term we hope to run our prayer spaces again, opening this up to all 5 schools this summer.

Big changes to Holiday club.

## Holiday Club 2026

Dates: Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> to Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> July

Location: Earsham School

Format: New!

## New format

We shall be looking at the story of the Prodigal Son over two days.

We shall have an upfront session lead like a collective worship.

The children will then be given a choice of activities to help them retell the story. – Drama, lego, small world and comic strips. These will then be shared with everyone.

We will then have a selection of activities to choose from, craft, lego, trains, prayer space activities, Godly play, chatty table, games table.

We will still have games, snack and of course pie!

## What we need?

We want to be able to share the good news of Christ children.

We need children.

We need some helpers.

We need people to pray for the children and us.

The meeting thanked Caroline for her diligent, compassionate work with all schools and across the Diocese, along with her team for Collective Worship and all out reaches.

## 7. **Safeguarding Report** –

Benefice – Safeguarding Officer – Mrs. Sally Thomson

### **Safeguarding Report for APCM 28.04.2026 held at Ditchingham Primary Academy.**

Safeguarding is naturally in all our minds – we take care when crossing the road, boiling the kettle, getting food in and out of a hot oven etc.: that normal vigilance is also needed in regards to safeguarding within our parishes and churches. Undertaking Safeguarding Training is really helpful to give a clear oversight of what is required – mostly about being aware.

Safeguarding Training for P.C.C. Members and Churchwardens now requires only two training courses to be completed, every three years at present:

#### **Basic Awareness**

##### **Foundation**

When you undertake these, please just let me know when you have passed, to enable records to be updated. Thank you.

**Each P.C.C.** has a named Safeguarding Liaison Officer to enable contact locally, or please contact me at the Church Office, telephone or email; Reverend Hutton is also available, as are other Ministers of our Benefice.

Each Safeguarding Officer is required to have a current DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service check). Can be done in Office or with Revd. Hutton.

Reporting a concern or an allegation (within 24hours - means completing a form (can be done within the Church Office directly), sending to Diocesan Safeguarding Team at Bishop's House, Norwich.

As Benefice Administrator, I update the Parish Safeguarding Dashboard. Most updates occur after the Annual P.C.C. meetings – so please ensure that each PCC meeting has Safeguarding on the agenda; that the Parish Liaison Officer gives a report on status; Safeguarding Policies are reviewed, signed and displayed at Church annually (usually done after laminating by me when signed) – the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders policy just needs dating and signing at APCM by PCC Chair and kept in your files).

That the poster 'Promoting a Safer Church', along with Safe Spaces poster + telephone numbers are displayed.

8. **Notices** – There were no notices for meeting, except for the privilege given to Chris and Caroline to attend a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2026, to thank them for their community work (proposed by Bishop of Norwich).

Chris Whipps gave a warm vote of thanks to Chris and Caroline for their work in encouraging and leading the Benefice on behalf of the meeting. Caroline answered that Chris and herself were also very grateful and encouraged by the warmth received and the support and interest given to their children too.

Reverend Hutton thanked Denton for the refreshments that would be available after dispersing to individual Parish Annual Meetings around the school. Thanks also given to Simon Wilkin for providing glasses for the APCM.