

SUMMARY OF MAIN PROVISIONS OF DRAFT SCHEME (NOT PART OF THE DRAFT SCHEME)

*This draft Scheme provides, in effect, for the parish of Offord D'Arcy with Offord Cluny being transferred from the benefice of Buckden with the Offords to the benefice of The Paxtons with Diddington and Southoe where it shall continue distinct and for the consequential amendment of benefice names and patronage, and also provides for the selection of the incumbent for the latter benefice*

*in the diocese of Ely.*

**DRAFT**

**PASTORAL SCHEME**

This Scheme is made by the Church Commissioners this       day of       20   in pursuance of the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011, the Right Reverend Martin Alan Seeley, Assistant Bishop in the diocese of Ely, duly appointed in that behalf pursuant to section 13 of the Dioceses, Pastoral and Mission Measure 2007, having consented thereto.

**Dissolution of benefice**

1.       The benefice of Buckden with the Offords in the diocese of Ely shall be dissolved.

**Creation of new benefice of Buckden**

2.       (1)       A new benefice which shall be named "The Benefice of Buckden" shall be created in the diocese of Ely, and the area of the new benefice shall comprise the parish of Buckden.  
(2)       The new benefice and its constituent parish shall belong to the archdeaconry of Huntingdon and Wisbech and the deanery of Saint Neots.  
(3)       The parsonage house of the benefice of Buckden with the Offords (known as The Vicarage, Church Street, Buckden, Saint Neots, PE19 5TL) shall without any conveyance or other assurance be vested in the incumbent of the new benefice in his or her corporate capacity as his or her official residence.  
(4)       If immediately before this Scheme comes into operation any person has been licensed by the Bishop to serve within the area of the benefice of Buckden with the Offords as priest-in-charge that person shall be the first incumbent of the new benefice. However, if immediately before this Scheme comes into operation no such person has been so licensed the first incumbent of the new benefice may be selected by the Bishop after consultation with the patrons of the new benefice and the parochial church councils of the parishes in the area of the new benefice.  
(5)       If immediately before this Scheme comes into operation any person holds an office of assistant curate (however described) in the benefice of Buckden with the Offords he, she or they shall as consequence of the dissolution of benefice effected by the Scheme hold such office or offices subject to the same terms of service in the new benefice of Buckden.  
(6)       The patronage of the new benefice shall be vested in the Bishop of Ely in her corporate capacity.

### **Creation of new benefice of The Offords**

3. (1) A new benefice which shall be named "The Benefice of The Offords", which shall be a rectory, shall be created in the said diocese, and the area of the new benefice shall comprise the parish of Offord D'Arcy with Offord Cluny.

(2) The new benefice and its constituent parish shall belong to the archdeaconry of Huntingdon and Wisbech and the deanery of Saint Neots.

(3) The patronage of the new benefice shall belong to His Majesty in right of His Crown and shall be exercisable by the Lord Chancellor on His behalf.

### **Creation of new benefice of The Paxtons with Diddington, Southoe and The Offords**

4. (1) The new benefice of The Offords created in pursuance of clause 3 hereof and the benefice of The Paxtons with Diddington and Southoe in the said diocese shall be united to create a new benefice which shall be named "The Benefice of The Paxtons with Diddington, Southoe and The Offords", which shall be a rectory, and the area of the new benefice shall comprise the parish of Diddington, the parish of Great Paxton, the parish of Little Paxton, the parish of Offord D'Arcy with Offord Cluny and the parish of Southoe, which parishes shall continue distinct.

(2) The new benefice and its constituent parishes shall belong to the archdeaconry of Huntingdon and Wisbech and the deanery of Saint Neots.

(3) If immediately before this Scheme comes into operation any person has been licensed by the Bishop to serve within the area of the benefice of The Paxtons with Diddington and Southoe as priest-in-charge that person shall be the first incumbent of the new benefice. However, if immediately before this Scheme comes into operation no such person has been so licensed the first incumbent of the new benefice may be selected by the Bishop after consultation with the patrons of the new benefice and the parochial church councils of the parishes in the area of the new benefice.

(4) If immediately before this Scheme comes into operation any person holds an office of assistant curate (however described) in the benefice of The Paxtons with Diddington and Southoe he, she or they shall as consequence of the union of benefices effected by the Scheme hold such office or offices subject to the same terms of service in the new benefice of The Paxtons with Diddington, Southoe and The Offords.

(5) The parsonage house of the benefice of The Paxtons with Diddington and Southoe (known as Vicarage, 24, St James Road, Little Paxton, St Neots, PE19 6QW) shall without any conveyance or other assurance be vested in the incumbent of the new benefice in his or her corporate capacity as his or her official residence.

(6) Subject to clause 4(3) hereof, the right of presentation to the new benefice shall be exercised alternately by His Majesty in right of His Crown and shall be exercisable by the Lord Chancellor on His behalf, who shall have the first turn; and the second turn jointly by the corporate body established for the Cathedral Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Lincoln; Edmund Thornhill, Esquire, of 87, Abbotsbury Road, London, W14 8EP; and the Warden and Scholars of the House or College of Scholars of Merton in the University of Oxford.

### **Coming into operation of this Scheme**

5. This Scheme shall come into operation upon the first day of the month following the date of it being made by the Church Commissioners.

In witness of which this Scheme has been duly executed as a deed by the Church Commissioners.

SIGNED by the )  
)  
Right Reverend Martin Alan Seeley, )  
)  
Assistant Bishop in the diocese of Ely. )

Executed as a Deed by the Church Commissioners for England

acting by two authorised signatories:

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Signature of Authorised Signatory

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Signature of Authorised Signatory

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**Notes by the Diocesan office (not forming part of the draft Scheme)**

The rationale behind the diocesan proposals is as follows:

**This proposal accords with the Ely Diocesan Strategy expressed as we pray to be generous and visible people of Jesus Christ.**

**It accords with the National Church aim to be simpler, bolder and humbler, with resources directed to growing younger and more diverse.**

**It proposes that the parish of Offord D’Arcy with Offord Cluny is transferred from the benefice of Buckden to become part of the existing four parish benefice of The Paxtons with Diddington and Southoe, ready for the potential appointment of a half-time incumbent in the benefice of Buckden (Sundays plus three) and a full-time incumbent in the new five parish benefice of The Paxtons with Diddington, Southoe and The Offords.**

**Our reasons are:**

**Visibility – rural parishes hope and pray for leadership that is local and visible. This proposal bases incumbents in the existing parsonages and thus provides**

**continuity of ministry presence. It has been hard for the Incumbent of Buckden and the Offords to be visible in the parish of Offord D'Arcy with Offord Cluny; we expect that this proposal will provide new opportunities.**

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**Generosity – the benefice of The Paxtons with Diddington and Southoe has a depth of lay ministers and an administrator, who have indicated their desire to fully embrace the parish of Offord D'Arcy with Offord Cluny and work together to enhance ministry in all the villages. Ministry with and in schools will continue to be a feature of both benefices.**

**Humility - the cost of supporting two full time clergy is becoming increasingly burdensome on these parishes. This re-organisation lowers the cost and redistributes the workload so that one full time and one half-time post can be sustained. This distribution of posts still depends on generous support from Diocesan investments and the committed giving of other parishes.**

**Simplicity – the move of the parish of Offord D'Arcy with Offord Cluny into The Paxtons with Diddington and Southoe represents the simplest and least disruptive reorganisation to achieve sustainable posts. We are confident that with the right appointments both benefices will continue to flourish**

Publication of this draft Scheme has been approved by the Church Commissioners but does not mean that they have taken a view on the merits of the diocesan case.

If they receive representations against the draft Scheme, the Commissioners will send all representations, both for and against, to the Bishop whose views will be sought. Individual representors will then receive copies of the Commissioners' correspondence with the Bishop (including copies of all the representations) and they may comment further in writing to the Commissioners in light of the diocesan response if they so wish.

If there are no representations against the draft Scheme, the Commissioners will make the Scheme and arrange for it to be brought into effect.

### Scheme drafting

The draft Scheme achieves the same end result as the Bishop's proposals while avoiding any complex restructuring of patronage arrangements as a result of the parish of Offord D'Arcy with Offord Cluny proposed to be moved from its current benefice to The Paxtons with Diddington and Southoe one. It also enables, in effect, the enlarged latter benefice to be a 'rectory' to reflect the parish of Offord D'Arcy with Offord Cluny's historic status. The new (temporary) benefice of The Offords is being created purely for ease of drafting purposes as it then immediately united with the benefice of The Paxtons with Diddington and Southoe.

**Selection of first incumbent – clause 2(4)**

It is intended to appoint a priest-in-charge to the benefice of Buckden with the Offords as soon as possible and this clause has been included to allow the priest-in-charge to become the first incumbent of the proposed new benefice of Buckden. The patrons and parishes concerned will be fully consulted over the appointment of the priest-in-charge. If it is not possible to appoint a priest-in-charge before the Scheme comes into effect the first incumbent of the new benefice may then either be selected by the Bishop under the authority contained in clause 2(4) or appointed under the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986, depending on how far the process of appointing a priest-in-charge has progressed.

**Selection of first incumbent – clause 4(3)**

It is intended to appoint a priest-in-charge to the benefice of The Paxtons with Diddington and Southoe as soon as possible and this clause has been included to allow the priest-in-charge to become the first incumbent of the proposed new benefice of The Paxtons with Diddington, Southoe and The Offords. The patrons and parishes concerned will be fully consulted over the appointment of the priest-in-charge. If it is not possible to appoint a priest-in-charge before the Scheme comes into effect the first incumbent of the new benefice may then either be selected by the Bishop under the authority contained in clause 4(3) or appointed under the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986, depending on how far the process of appointing a priest-in-charge has progressed.

Clause 2(5) and 4(4)

The above clauses has been included to ensure that any person holding an office of assistant curate (however described) shall as consequence of the dissolution and union of the benefices effected by the Scheme hold such office or offices subject to the same terms of service in the new benefice Buckden or the new benefice of The Paxtons with Diddington, Southoe and The Offords. Although there is currently no such unnamed office holder in post, this clause is included in case any such office holder is appointed before this Scheme comes into operation.

Churches etc

This Scheme does not alter the existing status of any of the churches, chapels of ease or licensed places of worship in the affected parishes.