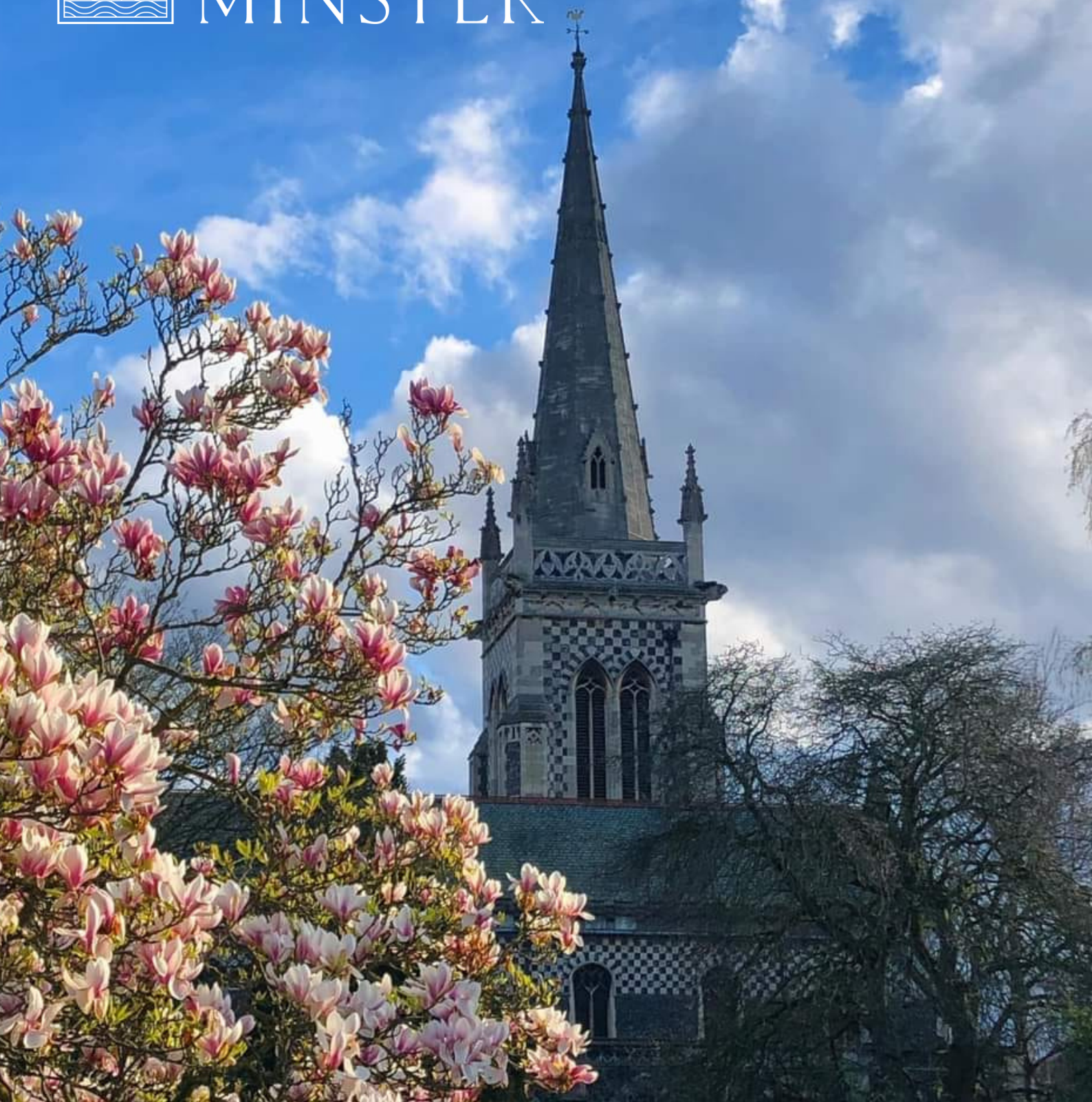


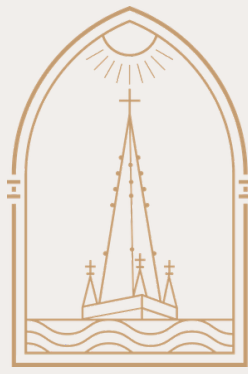


IPSWICH
MINSTER



PARISH PROFILE

September 2026



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WELCOME

From the Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich

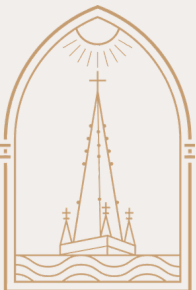


It is a joy to commend Ipswich Minster to you as you discern God's call.

At the heart of the town, the Minster holds a distinctive civic role: a place of gathering, remembrance and celebration for the whole community, working closely with local leaders and organisations to serve Ipswich's common life. Alongside this, it is a church of rich heritage and growing mission, offering generous welcome, confident worship and faithful witness. The Minster is also home to a flourishing choral tradition and music school, nurturing young musicians and enriching worship through high-quality music.

We seek a priest who will love Ipswich and its people, lead with prayer and wisdom, and engage collaboratively across church and civic life. There is much to build on and much to discover.

You will be warmly supported within the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich. Be assured of my prayers as you consider this calling.



The Rt Revd Dr Joanne Grenfell

WE ARE IPSWICH MINSTER

“Inspired by the Gospel we are deeply committed to loving and serving our community, inspiring renewal and transformation, and enabling people to flourish through prayer and positive action, ultimately discovering their true potential, that is who God has called them to be.” *Ipswich Minster Mission Statement 2022-2026*

Ipswich Minster would be nothing without its faithful members who regularly attend a range of services, each week. Many have been part of our church community for decades. Many others have found us since moving to Ipswich or becoming a Christian. We are blessed with a congregation that is truly inclusive, generously supporting the church, as they are able, both financially and with their time and energy.

“For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one in body with Christ, and individually we are members one of another.”

Romans 12.4-5

By way of introduction, we invited the members of our community to describe Ipswich Minster. Here are some responses.

“I believe our purpose is to show the love of God to all the people of our town. It is not easy, but our reach should exceed our grasp.”

“A church which is recognised as a key player in the growth of our town.”

“Innovating and continuing the growth and vision of this church community.”

“Building a worshipping bunch of folks who have fun, support one another and enjoy each other’s company.”

“A membership and congregation representing a good broad cross section of society including young and old.”

“This is a church of believers and friends. The ministry of music is a big inspiration and makes the liturgy a complete offering.”

WE ARE IPSWICH MINSTER

Ipswich Minster is above all a community characterised by:

- Generosity of spirit, expressed both in giving and in service through a wide variety of gifts
- A servant-hearted approach to ministry and to one another
- A strong sense of family across a diverse community—within our congregations, and through groups such as the choir, bell ringers and Top-Up Shop
- Faithfulness in prayer and service
- A commitment to excellence in worship, music, preaching, liturgy and teaching
- A spirit of hope and expectation, with a desire for continued growth in depth and in all areas of church life

We know that being designated Ipswich Minster is only a first step. We are now seeking a vicar who can lead us in making a radical difference to our town and the county it heads.

We know that our role as the civic church and our wonderful music-making have sown invaluable seeds – green shoots of growth and influence may already be apparent – but plants need nurturing, especially in times of drought. We are acutely aware that so much needs to be done: the homeless need to be brought in from the outside; young people – too often aimless and disenchanting – need support; the lonely need to find companionship; individuals and organisations, all working for the good, need uniting, sharing scarce resources rather than competing for them. But ‘good works’ are not enough. We recognise that our root challenge is articulating the place that God has in our lives.

We are ready for a vicar who can help us find words which are neither ‘cheesy’ nor trite, to touch the hearts of those who have no knowledge of Jesus. We are ready for a vicar who can help us discern not only where our energy should be directed in practical ways, but also how that energy can bring others to Faith. We are ready for the challenge of confronting apathy, hostility and suspicion, and direct opposition. This, we believe, is our calling for the decades ahead. But we need a shepherd, a carpenter, a zealot to take us forward.

THE MINISTRY WE OFFER AND SEEK

As expressed in our mission statement, Ipswich Minster is “*a welcoming, inclusive and open church offering peace and sanctuary in the heart of Ipswich. Inspired by the Gospel, we are deeply committed to loving and serving our community, inspiring renewal and transformation, and enabling people to flourish through prayer and positive action, so that all may discover their true potential as those whom God calls them to be.*”

We are seeking a priest who will lead and inspire our worshipping community through prayerful, profound liturgy and engaging, thoughtful preaching. This leadership will sustain and grow our life of mission, deepen discipleship, and strengthen our pastoral care.

Our civic role and our choral tradition are central to our identity, offering distinctive ways in which we serve the town, engage the wider community, and proclaim the Gospel with both dignity and accessibility.

We hope this Parish Profile offers a clear insight into who we are: a family of believers rooted in Ipswich, seeking to grow in faith and service. We trust it may also stir in you a sense of calling, and a conviction that your gifts and vision may find a home here as our new Vicar.



MISSION

As we say in our vision statement, we believe that Mission is at the heart of all we do, proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ and *“loving and serving our community inspiring renewal and transformation, and enabling people to flourish through prayer and positive action, ultimately discovering their true potential, that is who God has called them to be.”*

Mission is central in our life together.

Ipswich Minster and its churchyard, surrounded by all the challenges of urban life, is open to everyone seven days a week. Anyone can drop in. Many do, appreciating this peaceful oasis.

In our rhythm of worship the Gospel is set forth in preaching, prayer and song. We have a strong tradition of preaching, largely following the common lectionary.

We hold regular explorer/enquirer courses, both for adults and for young people using material from Alpha and from Christianity Explored.

We extend regular invitations to all for baptism and confirmation, not least to our younger choir members. Since the pandemic, the number of baptisms and confirmations has increased. The church community has significantly grown over recent years. We had our first baptism by total immersion a couple of years ago, and we are keen also to explore the installation of a baptistry as part of our re-ordering, as the church sees more teenage and adult converts in an era where infant baptism is less common. We have also seen younger choristers themselves ask for baptism.

Our choir enhances our worship and brings many to the church each Sunday, and includes fifty singers, over half of which are under the age of 18. We have weekly discipleship sessions for younger choristers and are committed to exploring ways of helping our teenage choristers in their journey of faith and discipleship.

Our Associate Priest joined us in 2025. Her post is funded, for three years, by a grant from the Diocese to develop an outreach programme to young people and families. This has started with a weekly Sunday School, Small Sounds and Mini Minster Maestros (see below) but needs sustaining into the future. Going forward, we want to further develop our ministry to children and young people outside the choir. For example, we have also explored obtaining a grant for a detached youth worker working across the town centre from the Minster.

MISSION

We opened our Top Up Shop in 2022, providing food, toiletries and household goods to anyone for a small weekly contribution. At least thirty paying customers attend regularly, but numbers can rise significantly and many of those attending support a wider family. Our community café runs alongside the Top Up Shop. A number of local people just come for company, a chat, a cup of coffee or tea, and a sandwich and cake; there is no charge. We frequently refer those who need help to Ipswich Citizens Advice (CAB) – a neighbour and close partner – for professional advice and guidance.



Our highly regarded Tower Talks are open to all as was the recent series of original lectures: A Church for England. Those attending come from a wide range of backgrounds.

Last year, our bell-ringers raised £30,000 themselves to purchase a set of training bells, enabling new ringers to learn the skill without creating a cacophony. As a result, twelve trainee ringers have now been drawn into the church community.

Throughout 2023, working with other churches and charities, Ipswich Minster co-ordinated The Sanctuary, a day centre for refugees, who were temporarily at that time being housed in the Novotel Hotel. Providing a safe, social area where these men could relax was highly valued.

Our support for the Ukrainian community, in and around Ipswich, continues. Public vigils in the town, and then services in church, for and led by this community, have taken place in Ipswich Minster and Ukrainian singers performed at our Charter 825 concert in 2025 to an audience drawn from across the town and beyond.

Each year, for the annual Christmas Tree Festival, around 8,000 visitors pass through the doors. Hundreds attend the Christingle services. The Open Days and tours we provide reinforce the message: we are a place where a warm welcome is guaranteed. We want our church to be a place where all feel comfort and peace. And we want everyone to understand that these flow from God's love.

We are keen to progress a relationship with Ipswich's large Romanian community to see how we might help facilitate their integration.

We believe that our next vicar will inherit a wonderful opportunity for developing our mission. We want to continue reaching into the town community where so many have little or no awareness of God's presence, working closely with the Diocese's 'Leading your Church into Growth' strategy. We look forward to supporting and encouraging our new vicar: an individual who can provide spiritual nourishment as well as pastoral care, strengthening our community and leading others to faith in Jesus Christ.

There is much to be done.



MINISTRY

Across a usual Sunday, over one hundred adults and many young people worship across all services. We pray, each day, for the town, believing that an active church is the engine of any thriving community. **Morning Prayer** is said at 8.30am in the Lady Chapel. Choral Evensong takes place on Thursday and Sunday afternoons. **Choral Matins** takes place on Sunday mornings. The Eucharist sits at the heart of our regular worship: on Wednesday mornings and at 8.00am on Sunday mornings, the **Book of Common Prayer service** is said; the **Eucharist from Common Worship** is sung on Sunday mornings with the leading of worship shared by our nationally recognised Minster Choir.



We have recently reintroduced a **Sunday School** during this service which meets in Church House next to the church. This service, with life events and other special services, are livestreamed on our **YouTube channel**.

Our pattern of worship is accessible while celebrating that which has been established for centuries. Ipswich Minster is the only church in the town to offer this range of services; our growing congregations show the extent this is valued. There is a challenge however: how best to ensure the regulars in each separate congregation are united.



DISCIPLESHIP

We have a discipleship programme which includes weekly discipleship groups and occasional study programmes, as well as annual ecumenical Lent study groups. The annual explorers/enquirers courses we hold, for both adults and young people, use material from 'Alpha' and 'Christianity Explored'.



In the past we have made various attempts to launch a programme of small groups, which have not always been successful. However, Friday Night Discipleship has recently been established and is exciting many; it is a space where theology, philosophy, psychological insight, and contemplative / meditative practices are explored.



PASTORAL CARE AND VISITING

Pastoral care and visiting are a central expression of our life together at Ipswich Minster. At present, this ministry is sustained through a combination of clergy-led visiting and the informal care offered within the congregation. The Vicar and other clergy regularly visit those who are housebound, in hospital, or in residential care, offering prayer, sacramental ministry, and personal support as needed.

We recognise that this is an area of important development. Work is now underway to establish a more cohesive and sustainable approach, with clearer channels of communication and a more intentional structure for pastoral visiting and support.

We are committed to fostering a culture in which pastoral care is understood as the responsibility of the whole church community. We hope to grow and equip a team—drawing on the gifts of lay and ordained members alike—so that all may be known, valued, and supported, and that no one feels overlooked or isolated within the life of the Minster.

OUR CIVIC ROLE

Ipswich Minster is privileged to serve as the civic church of Ipswich—a role that brings both responsibility and opportunity. Rooted in over a thousand years of Christian presence on this site, and formally recognised through the designation of St Mary le Tower as Ipswich Minster in January 2025, this ministry places us at the heart of the life of the county town of Suffolk.

This civic identity is expressed in a number of significant services held throughout the year, which gather civic leaders, local organisations, and the wider community. These occasions both mark important moments in the life of the town and offer opportunities for worship, reflection, and public witness, underlining the Minster's enduring connection with local government and civic life.

As the county town's civic church, Ipswich Minster also plays an important role in fostering ecumenical and interfaith relationships, recognising and engaging with the rich diversity of belief and practice across Ipswich and Suffolk.

As our next Vicar, you will have the opportunity to deepen and extend relationships across the community, building on existing connections with partners such as the University of Suffolk, Ipswich Central, Together for Ipswich, local and county councils, the office of the High Sheriff, the constabulary, and the Member of Parliament. There is also scope to strengthen engagement with a wide range of community groups, including Suffolk Pride and Suffolk Windrush.



The role offers further opportunities for public ministry, including civic occasions such as the county's Remembrance Service in Christchurch Park, which draws several thousand people each year, as well as engagement with local and regional media. There is also an expectation that you will serve as chaplain to the Royal British Legion in Ipswich.

The Vicar of Ipswich Minster is therefore uniquely placed to bear witness to the Gospel in the public square—speaking with wisdom, humility, and grace into the life of the town.

This is a privileged ministry, requiring discretion, maturity, and sensitivity, and we look forward to welcoming someone who can sustain and develop these relationships with confidence and integrity.

OUR CHORAL MINISTRY

Ipswich Minster has long been recognised as a centre for choral excellence. It continues to offer a traditional pattern of choral worship, with a strong emphasis on the involvement and formation of young people. The choir numbers around fifty singers, more than half of whom are under the age of eighteen.

Since September 2025, Ipswich Minster has developed a pioneering singing pathway from infancy through to adulthood. The Minster has been selected and funded as part of the Cathedral Music Trust's Small Sounds programme, offering a weekly drop-in group for toddlers and their parents. Alongside this, the Mini Minster Maestros—our choir for children aged five to eight—provides a natural progression, nurturing young singers and preparing them for the chorister programme while helping families to feel rooted within the life of the church.



We are also committed to the spiritual as well as musical formation of our choristers. A programme of regular sessions supports their growth in faith, understanding, and discipleship, complemented by participation in the Royal School of Church Music awards scheme, which encourages both musical development and Christian formation.



Ipswich Minster plays an active supporting role within the diocese for churches across East Suffolk that maintain a choral tradition in their worship. Recent initiatives have included 'Come & Sing' events, such as an Advent service at St Michael's Church Framlingham, and assistance in establishing a new choir within the Clopton Deanery. Further opportunities are developing in partnership with the Royal School of Church Music Choir Project.

The Music Department is partnered with Framlingham College, and both institutions are associate members of the Choir Schools' Association. This partnership is rooted in a shared commitment to the English choral tradition, alongside a determination to widen access to high-quality singing opportunities, particularly in disadvantaged communities across Ipswich and East Suffolk, through outreach and workshops.



At Ipswich Minster, we are justly proud of our music-making. Sustaining and developing this rich tradition offers our new Vicar a significant opportunity to use choral worship as a means of mission, formation, and encounter with the Gospel.



OUR BUILDINGS

The church of St Mary le Tower was rebuilt in the mid-nineteenth century through the generosity of a local benefactor. Its interior reflects the influence of the Oxford Movement, and that Tractarian tradition continues to shape our worship today. The building is rich in character, with fine stained glass, wall paintings, and woodwork—some incorporating elements from earlier churches on this site.

However, the Minster presents significant and ongoing challenges. A large Victorian building of this scale is costly to maintain, and it is not well suited in its current form to the needs of twenty-first century ministry. There are no lavatories within the church itself, accessibility is limited, and the fabric requires careful and continuous attention. Alongside the need for reordering, there is a clear and pressing requirement to strengthen our approach to funding both routine and reactive maintenance, ensuring that the building is sustainably cared for in the years ahead.



In response, and following the securing of initial funding, we have commissioned a feasibility study from a reputable architect to explore how the building might be adapted to meet present and future needs. Ipswich Minster recognises the importance of enhancing its facilities to support mission and growth. Priorities include improved lavatories, catering provision, and storage; the creation of more flexible and accessible spaces; and the possible introduction of a baptistry, reflecting an increasing number of adult candidates for baptism.



Our vision is to create spaces that are both beautiful and fit for purpose: places that inspire worship, enable growth, and are sustainable for the future. This includes a commitment to improved accessibility, sensitive engagement with our heritage, and progress towards the Church of England's Net Zero Carbon goals. This is a substantial and demanding area of work. It will require not only imagination and leadership, but also the ability to engage with fundraising, develop external partnerships, and build confidence among supporters and funders. We look to our new Vicar to help lead this process, working with the PCC and wider community to shape and deliver a realistic and compelling long-term vision.

The most recent Quinquennial inspection was completed in August 2025, and the PCC has already expedited roof works in response to this report.

Church House, located within the churchyard, provides the parish office, a function room, kitchen, and toilet facilities. These spaces were refurbished in 2025 to support the church's wider ministry, while the first floor is let as a private residence.



Ipswich Minster also owns Tower House (above left), situated opposite the church. Since 2024, part of the building has been leased to Ipswich Citizens Advice Bureau, providing an income in support of our ministry, while the remaining space houses the Minster's Song School.

Ipswich Minster is designated as one of the Church of England's Major Churches and is an active member of the Major Churches Network. This reflects its significance within the town and region, and brings both opportunity and responsibility as we seek to sustain and develop this historic building for future generations.



SUPPORTING INFORMATION

BACKGROUND CONTEXT

Ipswich Minster is sustained by a committed and generous congregation, whose giving enables the day-to-day life and ministry of the church. Careful financial stewardship in recent years has brought general operational expenditure into balance, and the parish has consistently met its parish share in full. Alongside this, Tower House now provides a modest but helpful income stream in support of the church's mission and ministry.

At the same time, the scale and nature of the Minster building bring ongoing financial pressures, and significant fundraising remains essential to support both the care of the fabric and the development required to sustain and grow our ministry.

The life of the Minster has seen encouraging growth and renewal. The congregation has increased in number, with rising interest in baptism and confirmation, and a growing sense of engagement among those drawn from across Ipswich and beyond the parish boundary. There are currently 140 people on the electoral roll, the majority of whom live beyond the parish boundary. As a Minster church, we serve a "wider parish", gathering people from a broad geographical area who contribute actively to our common life and witness.



The Minster is situated at the heart of a town centre that is itself changing rapidly. Significant residential development through the conversion of former commercial premises is bringing new residents into the parish, while the town centre and night-time economies present both opportunities and challenges for mission. We recognise that we are called not only to serve those who already find their way to the Minster, but also to engage with the growing and increasingly diverse community that lives, works and socialises within the parish.

Our civic relationships are active and developing, and our designation in 2025 as Ipswich Minster reflects the church's central role within the town and county. These developments provide strong foundations for the future. We look ahead with realism and hope, recognising both the opportunities and the responsibilities that come with being a significant church at the heart of Ipswich

VISION STRATEGY

The parish is now coming to the end of a fruitful five-year vision strategy, launched in 2021, shaped around five areas of focus: welcome, worship, faith, action, and sustainability.

The year 2026 therefore represents a significant moment to pause and reflect. While we anticipate the next phase of our life together being shaped by the priorities outlined below, we are conscious that this is a time for prayerful discernment as we seek to understand what God is calling us to be and to do. The gifts and charisms of our next Vicar will be central in helping to shape and animate this emerging vision.

Key areas of focus include:

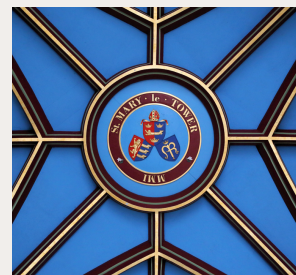
Progressing a major reordering of the church building, with an architect appointed and a feasibility study expected shortly.

Building further on our outreach with children and families, led by our Associate Priest, whose role is dedicated to this work.

Sustaining and developing our choral tradition, which lies at the heart of our ministry, with particular emphasis on singing pathways and the involvement of young people.

Maintaining financial stability through the continued generosity of the congregation, alongside a clear commitment to prudent stewardship, income generation, grant seeking and ongoing fundraising.

Strengthening our role as the civic church of Ipswich, deepening collaborative relationships with the organisations and institutions that shape the life of the town.



All of this is rooted in our fundamental purpose: to be a church of mission, grounded in liturgical excellence, drawing all whose lives we touch closer to the person of Jesus Christ, and equipping them to serve God in their daily lives. We are committed to being a welcoming and inclusive church, seeking to value and embrace people of all backgrounds, identities, and abilities, and to enable all to participate fully in the life of the Minster.

THE FINANCIAL POSITION

Following the pandemic, the church had an unsustainable annual operational deficit.

With a new, prayerful sense of vision and purpose, regular giving increased and a one-off appeal in Christmas 2024 brought in £34,000 over just a few weeks – exactly what we needed to turn a significant deficit into a small surplus. 2025 has also seen a small surplus, but without the need for another one-off appeal.



We continue to be so grateful for the generosity of our congregation. We have 95 regular givers (up from 60 a few years ago), giving on average almost £100 a month each. Additionally we regularly receive generous one-off gifts.

A new arrangement leasing Tower House to the Citizen's Advice Bureau has also started to generate additional income. We have established a Finance Committee, chaired by the incumbent, meeting at least four times a year. It monitors expenditure and sets a proposed budget for the PCC to agree. The church has always paid its parish share in full and continues to do so.

Though our new vicar will inherit a relatively healthy situation, we are not complacent. We have not spent what we should on Fabric over the past few years and this significant challenge needs to be addressed going forward.

In 2025, the overall income was over £350k not including exceptional items. Reserves (some in restricted funds) total over £250k, not including restricted funds for Tower House and Fabric. More details can be found in the recently approved Annual Report and Accounts, which can be found at:

register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk
and by searching for charity number 1128976



THE STAFF AND LEADERSHIP TEAM

Ipswich Minster is supported by a strong and committed staff team, ready to work collaboratively with the new Vicar.

The team includes an Associate Priest, two curates (one stipendiary and one non-stipendiary), a Reader, an Operations Manager, a Parish Administrator and Fundraising Officer who also serves as personal assistant to the Vicar. We also have three honorary vergers who, in addition to their standard duties, oversee the sound system and our weekly live-streaming of services. The team is further supported by a cleaner.

The music department is led by a full-time Director of Music, supported by an Assistant Director of Music and Organist, alongside additional music staff.



Lay leadership is strong, experienced, and deeply committed. Several members of the Parochial Church Council have previously served as churchwardens, bringing valuable insight and continuity.

The PCC is intentional in seeking to be as inclusive as possible, and in working collaboratively to support the mission and ministry of the Minster.



MUSIC

The Music Department, based in its dedicated Song School in Tower House, plays a central role in delivering the choral ministry of Ipswich Minster.

Alongside its liturgical responsibilities, the department is actively engaged in outreach. The Director of Music works with several local state primary schools, and there are established links with independent schools. While this work supports the recruitment of choristers, it is also developing into a broader vision for singing across Ipswich, in partnership with Suffolk Music Service, the diocese, and other local organisations.

For more than fifty years, the lunchtime concert series—held in both summer and winter seasons—has brought high-quality live music into the heart of the town. Around thirty concerts each year are well attended and supported by local sponsors, enabling the Minster both to welcome distinguished performers and to contribute positively to its finances. Free to attend, these concerts are an important expression of the Minster's commitment to accessibility and hospitality.

The choir itself is a distinctive and flourishing body, comprising boys, girls, and adult sopranos, alongside altos, tenors, and basses. Different combinations sing at regular services, with the full choir coming together for major festivals and occasions.



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The choir has been featured on BBC Songs of Praise, broadcast live on BBC Radio 4 Sunday Worship, and contributed to services for the Church of England's online platforms. Its recording *The Road to Bethlehem* was selected as Classic FM's "Discovery of the Week" in 2021 and described as "spellbinding" by John Brunning.

Recent musical highlights have included performances of *St John Passion*, the premiere of the *Wolsey Mass* by Ben Parry, Evensongs at York Minster, Hampton Court and St Paul's Cathedral, and collaborations with the Ipswich Choral Society, including a performance of the finale of *Symphony No. 9*. Recordings of *Gloria in D* and *Foundling Hospital Anthem* were released in 2024, and recent choir tours have included a visit to Arras, Ipswich's twin town.



The Music Department is also deeply committed to the spiritual formation of its choristers. A regular programme of discipleship, supported by volunteers from the congregation, runs alongside the musical training, encouraging growth in faith and understanding. Many choristers go on to explore baptism and confirmation, often drawing their families more deeply into the life of the church.

The choir is therefore not only central to the Minster's worship, but also to its wider mission and community life.

THE BELL TOWER

For hundreds of people in Ipswich, the sound of the Minster's twelve bells is the most significant reminder that there is an active church in their town. Our bells have been an 'external choir' for over three hundred years.

The historical reputation of the tower in the world of bellringing is considerable due to the pioneering efforts of the ringers 100 years ago.

Our present-day ringers' combined experience is such that they also provide energy and expertise to other parishes across Suffolk, regularly supporting over twenty across East Anglia to ensure that these churches can continue to ring their bells every Sunday and recruit fresh ringers.

There are, inevitably, financial challenges ahead as the bells require some standard maintenance and costs are not cheap. However, the fact that we are always able to ring all twelve of our bells each Sunday morning and even on Christmas Day (a feat some cathedrals cannot achieve) demonstrates the value of Ipswich Minster Tower.

Every week, of every year the bells ring out a clear message: these are your bells; this is your church; come inside.



LIVING IN LOVE AND FAITH

Within the Church of England's Living in Love and Faith initiative, we feel it is important and right to locate Ipswich Minster within this.

Firstly, it would be fair to say that within the Minster community the breadth and diversity of views present in the wider Church of England is also represented here. Indeed, that is currently also the case within the PCC.

It is important for us that people of different theological positions and perspectives are valued, respected and welcomed so they may play an active part in the life of the church. In recent years, this has worked very well and been incredibly fruitful.



However, it is also important to make clear (as can be read in our mission statement) that Ipswich Minster is an inclusive church.

On the clergy team there is someone in a same-sex relationship, there are also many same-sex couples in the congregation.

It is important that any prospective candidate is aware of the church community's commitment to the full inclusivity of all people, whatever their sexual orientation.

SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding is a strand running through all we do.

Two PCC members actively manage safeguarding, and report back to the PCC at each meeting.

Advice from our excellent diocesan team is always sought whenever the need arises. Training is scrupulously managed and tracked.

We are never complacent but believe safeguarding is becoming established across our culture. We know that sound, efficient and high-profile systems are the best way to create a safer church. We ensure that everyone knows that safeguarding is a shared responsibility.

We commit to:

Promoting a safer environment and culture

Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children and vulnerable adults

Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation

Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons

Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns/allegations of abuse and other affected persons

Responding to those that may pose a present risk

IPSWICH AND THE PARISH

The Minster's parish is the second most deprived in the diocese and sits in the bottom twelve percent of all Church of England parishes. At the last census, the resident population numbered 1,971. Most of the buildings are shops and businesses, or vacant, but the parish population is growing as former shops are converted into flats.

Out of 12,178 parishes in the country, the parish of Ipswich Minster ranks 856 where 1 is the most deprived. With regards to most categories, indicating deprivation, within the diocese the parish sits a little below the median. The number of people living alone sits within the top quartile, but the number of older people sits within the bottom quartile. [*Church Urban Fund*]



There is a Bishop's Mission Order operating in our parish. River Church, a Holy Trinity Brompton network church, was established over four years ago in the Waterfront area. We hope to see increasing collaboration and mutual support between the two Anglican communities.

For the past decade or so, Ipswich has struggled to re-establish itself following the demise of local industries and the decline of High Street shopping. However, it is now facing the future with a new zest and enthusiasm. The recent rise of Ipswich Town football club and the publicity generated by local star Ed Sheeran, has undoubtedly helped. But the town also has a great cultural and arts scene, with Aldeburgh and Snape within reach of an easy drive. The revival in Ipswich's arts and heritage has prompted the recent bid to become the 2029 City of Culture.

Ipswich is also only one hour by train from London, with trains running late into the night meaning an evening out is easy, cheap, and comfortable. Housing, designed for commuters is now available.

The Suffolk countryside with its beautiful villages surround the town. The coast is close by, with bathing at Shingle Street, Southwold, or Felixstowe – suiting all tastes.

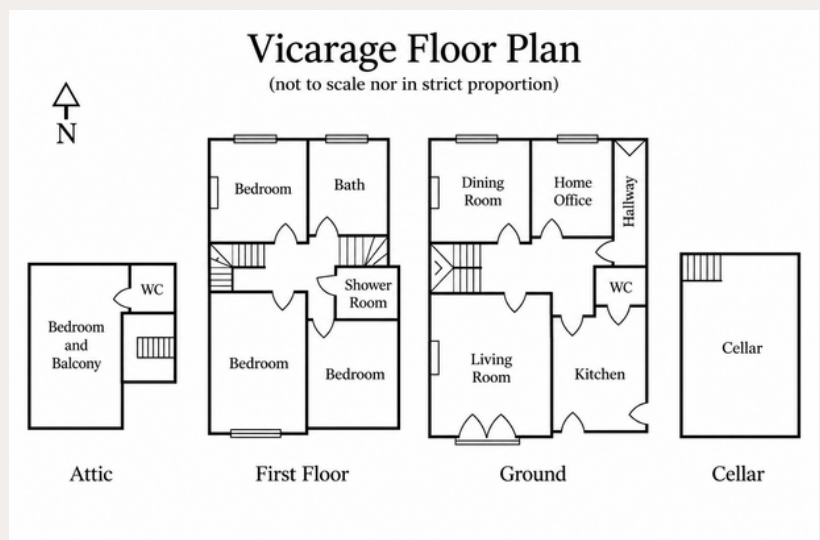
THE VICARAGE

The Vicarage, at 53 Fonnereau Road, was acquired in 2024 so that the Vicar would be able to walk to the church in under five minutes. The semi-detached building is Victorian with good sized rooms; it is in excellent decorative order. It is heated by a gas boiler.

The ground floor comprises a south-facing sitting room (20 x 16 feet approx.) and kitchen/ breakfast room (20 x 12 feet approx.), a dining room (16 x 18 feet approx.), a small office and a cloakroom. There is a large, attractive basement room and a separate cellar. There are three bedrooms on the first floor – of which one has been used as the vicar's study – with one large attic bedroom on the second floor. The roof terrace, opening off from the attic room, commands far-reaching views to the south. There is a bathroom and a shower room.

The south-facing rear garden is largely laid to lawn with shrubs. There is rear gate into Charles Street. The house is set back off Fonnereau Road and has front parking for up to five vehicles on the driveway.

Excellent schools, doctors' and dentists' surgeries are within walking distance. Ipswich's foremost park, Christchurch Park, is over the road. Popular and attractive pubs, serving Suffolk beers, are within a few minutes' walk away.



THE DEANERY AND THE DIOCESE



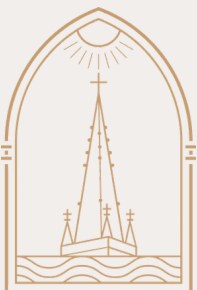
Ipswich is a great place to live and minister, full of variety, challenge and opportunity. I have come to love the town and its people, and I am excited about the part our churches can play in its life.

The Minster has a unique place at the heart of Ipswich and this is a really important time in its life. We are looking for someone who will love the people, get to know the town and work with us to discern what God might be doing next.

You will also be joining a supportive and relational Deanery, where clergy and lay leaders are intentional about working together, caring for one another and sharing in God's mission across Ipswich. Across the wider Archdeaconry you will find colleagues who are generous, prayerful and committed to one another. I look forward to getting to know you, working alongside you and supporting you in your ministry.

If God might be calling you to Ipswich, I would love to hear from you.

The Ven Samantha Brazier-Gibbs



OUR PRAYERS FOR THE PROCESS

A busy church always runs the risk of focusing solely on getting things done effectively and efficiently. But we know that a truly successful church has to be founded on prayer. As we seek to align ourselves to God's purpose for Ipswich Minster and the wider community, we are praying regularly during the interregnum for the selection of our next vicar.

The following are just a selection of prayers submitted by our young choristers.

DEAR GOD,

... please let the new vicar be talkative, very kind and caring towards the congregation and the wider community in Ipswich. I would like them to be passionate about what we do and have a sense of humour. Also to know what a welcoming church they will be entering. Amen

...please make the vicar always nice, football lover (Ipswich) talkative, caring, caring for the church, good sermons. Never ever neglect the church or talk about it in a bad way, also keep the Top up Shop going and connect with people in the congregation and town. Amen

... please can you grant us a vicar who respects the church community. The vicar needs to be kind, helpful, happy, good at singing, a little bit cheeky, and understand about the community. Amen

... please help the new vicar to be respectful of the church and its people. Help them to be respectful towards the choir and music and help continue the safety and accessibility of it. Also help them to be funny and nice to be around with a good personality. It would be nice for them to be a good speaker and have funny, entertaining sermons and for them to be enthusiastic and confident but not arrogant. And lastly please let them be a supporter of Ipswich Town Football Club. Amen

**WE HOPE THIS PARISH PROFILE HAS GIVEN YOU A
SENSE OF WHO WE ARE AT IPSWICH MINSTER.
COME AND MEET US!**

IPSWICH MINSTER — THE PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL QUALITIES, SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

We are seeking a Vicar who:

- has a mature and disciplined prayer life, a deep personal love for Jesus Christ, and a desire to help others grow in faith
- can lead a large, multi-generational church with confidence, humility, and clarity of vision
- is an engaging and thoughtful preacher and teacher, able to communicate scripture in ways that are clear, relevant, and adaptable to different contexts
- is committed to the transformative power of the Gospel, with a natural ability to speak about faith in a wide range of settings
- brings a strong pastoral instinct, combined with the ability to build and sustain a culture of shared pastoral care
- will honour and sustain the beauty of worship, including a commitment to dignified, excellent liturgy and the choral tradition
- can inspire and enable clergy, staff, and lay leaders to work collaboratively in the service of God's kingdom
- is committed to nurturing a diverse and inclusive church community with grace, sensitivity, and integrity
- is able to build authentic relationships across the community and is at ease in civic and public settings
- demonstrates emotional intelligence, strong interpersonal skills, and the ability to lead with humility
- is financially and strategically aware, with the capacity to oversee fundraising initiatives and support the long-term sustainability of the Minster
- is able to contribute to the leadership of significant projects, including the reordering of a major heritage building
- communicates clearly and effectively, both orally and in writing, and is confident in engaging with media and digital platforms
- is well organised, with the administrative and practical skills needed to lead a complex organisation

Above all, we are seeking someone with energy, focus, and a sense of calling to lead Ipswich Minster in the next stage of its life and mission.

DESIRABLE QUALITIES, SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

We would particularly welcome experience in:

- urban ministry, including work in areas of deprivation
- leading or contributing to major building or reordering projects
- engaging effectively with local and regional media
- developing ministry with children, young people, and families
- enabling the growth and development of church communities
- leading and managing both paid staff and volunteer teams



SUPPORTING OUR NEXT VICAR

WHAT THE CHURCH COMMUNITY CAN OFFER

We hope this Parish Profile conveys something of the richness and opportunity of ministry at Ipswich Minster. This is a role in which a priest can make a significant and visible contribution to the life of the Church and the wider town.

We recognise, however, that this post carries considerable responsibility. In response, the church community is committed to supporting the Vicar in the following ways:

- underpinning the vicar's ministry with prayer
- recognising that the various dimensions to this post will take some time to fully absorb and providing necessary support
- regular meetings with the churchwardens to discuss the work in hand and ensure that an appropriate balance is achieved between labour and rest
- accountability, and support to take a full day off a week, in addition to the apportioned periods of annual leave
- the support of the other members of the clergy team in delivering liturgical and pastoral responsibilities
- regular PCC meetings to ensure that the lay leadership is engaged in current church business and able to share responsibility for its delivery
- guaranteed time and space to explore aspects of ministry, within the parish, wider diocese and wider Church, which the vicar finds personally rewarding
- maintaining excellent relationships within the diocesan and civic community
- support for involvement in local and national projects if vicar feels so moved
- opportunities to meet socially with sincere offers of friendship
- engaging with the very supportive deanery





HC
HATTON COURT



IPSWICH MINSTER

Tower Street

Ipswich

IP1 3BE

www.ipswichminster.org