Associate Rector

in the Benefice of All Saints and Holy Sepulchre, Northampton



The Role and Partnership

Associate Rector, All Saints and Holy Sepulchre Northampton

Thank you for reading this profile. The role we are seeking to fill is a new one, built around a mission partnership—described in the sections that follow—between two town-centre churches with many shared interests and aims. The appointment of a new Associate Rector to the two churches will be a key element in cementing this partnership, building on the good groundwork already accomplished. This makes both the role and the landscape challenging to describe, but the overarching objective is clear: to reignite mission and ministry at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, giving support to those within the worshipping and wider community who are already giving so much, and to develop the partnership with All Saints' Church in productive and imaginative ways.

While good foundations already exist, we have tried not to overstate our plans. Instead, we have sought to describe the potential of the role, in the hope that it will prove attractive to a candidate seeking something distinctive, creative and missionally significant.

Holy Sepulchre: Summary, Challenges and Vision

Holy Sepulchre is one of Northampton's most distinctive churches: a Grade I listed Norman round church, a place of deep heritage, and a parish with a small, faithful worshipping community, extensive halls, charitable trusts, community partnerships and significant possibilities for renewal. Its challenges are also considerable: rebuilding confidence after a long vacancy, sustaining regular worship and pastoral care, caring for a complex historic estate, developing the church's place within a changing town-centre district, and discerning how its buildings and partnerships can serve the Gospel in an area of social need. The vision is to renew Holy Sepulchre as a living centre of worship, welcome, heritage, community service and mission, and to accomplish this in tandem with the substantial programme of public works planned in the district.

All Saints: Summary, Challenges and Vision

All Saints is Northampton's civic church: a prominent town-centre parish with a strong Prayer Book Catholic and Anglo-Catholic tradition, a substantial choral and liturgical life, a daily pattern of prayer and worship, and established civic, ecumenical, interfaith, educational and cultural relationships. Its challenges include sustaining a demanding worshipping and musical life, deepening discipleship and lay leadership, serving a small but highly significant parish area, responding to deprivation and town-centre change, and using its public role for mission. The vision is for All Saints to continue as a confident, hospitable and eucharistically centred church whose civic identity is rooted in prayer, worship, pastoral care and service.

Role Priorities

Ministry

- Lead pastoral care, Christian initiation, discipleship and worship across the benefice, supporting renewal while honouring each parish's identity and theological settlement.
- Support town-centre ministry among communities facing deprivation, transition and opportunity, including anti-poverty work, hospitality, schools, tourism and heritage.
- Participate in diocesan and deanery life, including Northampton Deanery Chapter, supporting colleagues and connecting benefice mission with wider strategy.

Civic

- Strengthen the churches' civic contribution to Northampton through relationships with heritage, charitable, educational and community partners.

Partnerships

- Develop shared heritage, tourism and education partnerships, including work with the Churches Conservation Trust, schools and volunteers.
- Help the two parishes build a generous mission partnership through shared administration, resources, pastoral support and public witness.

Development

- Work with the parish to fulfil the potential and objectives outlined in *Unleashing Potential*, the 2019 report on the future of the church building.

Person Specification

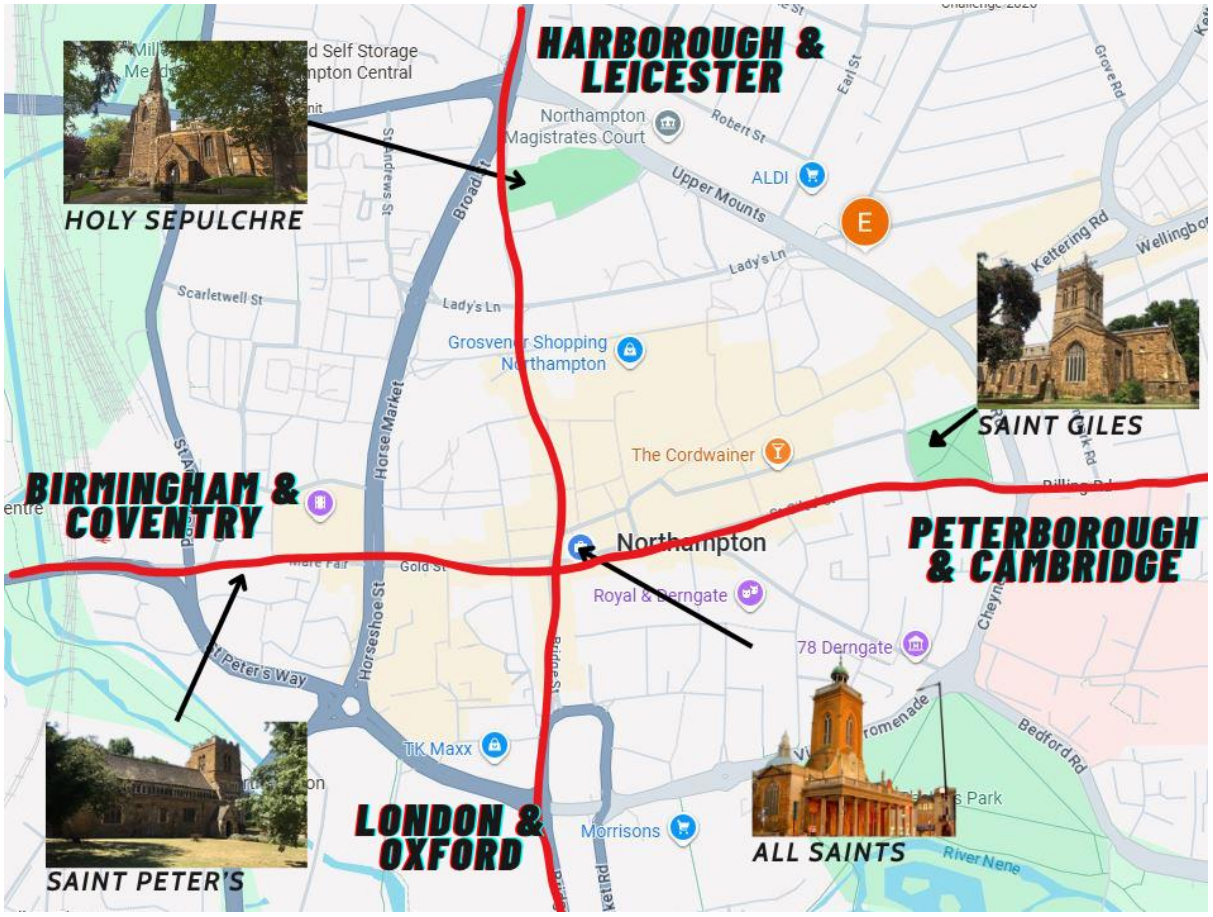
- A priest who has satisfactorily completed post-ordination IME and is looking for their next challenge within a supportive team.
- A priest of prayer, pastoral warmth and theological depth, able to inhabit and commend a sacramental and liturgical tradition.
- A collaborative leader who can build trust across two distinct parishes and work constructively with clergy, lay leaders, volunteers, staff and external partners.
- A mission-minded pastor with energy for evangelism, discipleship, community engagement and ministry among those experiencing poverty or marginalisation.
- Someone with imagination for heritage, tourism, civic life, the arts, schools and interfaith or ecumenical relationships.
- An effective and visible administrator, able to manage complexity, communicate clearly, prioritise well and maintain a regular presence across both churches and their wider communities.
- A resilient and hopeful priest who can work with complexity, limited resources and developing structures without losing sight of people, prayer and the Gospel.
- A priest of (or in sympathy with) the Society of St Wilfrid & St Hilda, able to work across difference.
- A priest able to combine pastoral and liturgical leadership with attention to buildings, partnerships, stewardship, volunteers, schools, heritage, community engagement and long-term planning.

The Team

The Associate Rector will work with the Rector, parish officers, wardens, volunteers, administrative staff and musical staff, and may also work alongside a potential training curate. Across the two churches there are committed lay leaders, dedicated volunteers, established staff roles and a wide range of community and civic relationships. The post will require close partnership with those already carrying responsibility, while also helping to shape a clearer shared pattern of ministry for the future.

Location

This is a map of Northampton Town Centre, together with the location of the town centre churches. It shows All Saints at the intersection of Birmingham-Peterborough and London-Leicester roads.



Brief History of the Parishes

The **Church of the Holy Sepulchre** remains a strong contender, alongside St Peter's Church, for the title of Northampton's oldest parish church. Historians broadly agree that the origins of the church date back to roughly 1086, when the Norman earls marked their return from the Crusades by founding an imprint of Jerusalem's Church of the Holy Sepulchre, founded, it is alleged, by St Helena, the mother of Constantine the Great. It is one of only four surviving Round Churches in the British Isles, and remains one of the best preserved, being the only example not to be founded by Templars. Successive generations saw substantial expansion build upon the Norman Chancel, and the founding of a four-bay nave, some of which is preserved for larger services, and some set aside for community use. The Church's crusader heritage provided a fitting foundation for a more lasting association with the Army, and the eventual foundation of St George's Chapel, the regimental chapel of the Northamptonshire Regiment.

The Church lies adjacent to Greyfriars, the United Kingdom's largest publicly-owned brownfield development site. Under the oversight of Northampton Forward, plans are now in development to bring this district back to life, promising a reconnection of Sheep Street and the church environs with the town centre in a way not seen since the New Town era. The church is home to a small and eclectic worshipping community.

All Saints' Church was founded, possibly on Saxon foundations, by the Norman Earls of Northampton sometime during the twelfth century, and enjoyed a place of prominence from its earliest years as Northampton's mercantile church. A substantial fire destroyed much of the church in September 1675, and the present church, dating from 1680, owes much to the patronage of King Charles II and to the many benefactors who supported the town in the aftermath. A number of notable clergy have served here, including the Reverend Edward Reynolds, to whom the General Thanksgiving in the Book of Common Prayer is generally attributed, and his son-in-law, the Venerable John Conant.
Briefly a collegiate church in the reign of King Henry VI, All Saints later reflected a distinctly presbyterian style for much of the Reformation period. Today this has changed considerably. The parish now embraces a Prayer Book Catholic tradition, with an emphasis on confident liturgy, the regular celebration of the Eucharist and many nourishing influences from the Catholic movement in the Church of England. The church building remains open for much of the day, seven days a week. In term time there are ten acts of prayer and worship each week, and the church continues to be a place of welcome and prayer for all who live, work and learn in the town.

In recent years, All Saints' has become an eclectic and diverse church, reflecting both the communities from which people travel to worship here and those who live in an expanding residential sector in the town centre.

The parish population of 2,878 residents represents a rise of 75% on the last decade. The church maintains strong ecumenical and interfaith links. As Northampton's (and Northamptonshire's) civic church, it welcomes not only its regular Sunday and weekday worshipping community, but also worshippers from across the county at moments of celebration and remembrance.

All Saints: Detailed Profile



The Bishop of Richborough visiting All Saints' in 2025

All Saints' Parish: Worship, Community, Buildings and Context

Two parish churches lie within the boundary. The first is the Parish Church of All Saints with St Katherine, reflecting the closure and demolition of the former church of St Katherine in 1953. The second is the Parish Church of St Peter. Made redundant in 1996, St Peter's is now cared for by the Churches Conservation Trust, whose new headquarters are being established in a nearby ancient coaching inn presently under restoration.

The tradition is Prayer Book Catholic / Anglo-Catholic.
Electoral roll number(s): 84

Pattern of Sunday worship across the benefice

8am	Holy Communion (BCP 1662) (USA: 12)
10.30am	Choral Eucharist (CW Order 1 in Trad Language) (USA 95)
4.00pm	Parish Eucharist (at Holy Sepulchre)
occasionally	Choral Evensong

Weekday services:

Monday	12.30pm	Low Mass
Tuesday	10.30am	Low Mass (at Holy Sepulchre)
Wednesday	12.30pm	Mass for Healing & Reconciliation
	6.00pm	Choral Evensong
Thursday	12.30pm	Low Mass
	6.00pm	Choral Evensong
Friday	12.30pm	Low Mass

Number of Occasional Offices:

Baptisms	12
Weddings	2
Funerals	6

Pattern of daily offices:

9am	Morning Prayer
5pm	Evening Prayer (where said)

Staff or team members:

The Reverend Nicolas Boisson (Assistant Curate, full-time)
Jem Lowther, Director of Music (0.7 FTE)
Laurence Caldecote, Assistant Organist (sessional)
Jessica Johnson, Vocal Tutor (sessional)
Katie Steel, Parish Administrator (0.3 FTE)
Permanent staff employed by café franchisee



Choir Tour to Zaragoza in 2023

Lay involvement:

- A small group of lay people are involved in supporting at Choral Evensongs.
- The Friends of All Saints' Music, consisting mainly of choir parents and senior choristers, organize international choir tours and domestic choir trips, aided by our full-time Director of Music, and sessional Assistant Organist and Singing Tutor.
- A dedicated team of Churchwardens oversee the maintenance and opening of the church building, as well as acting as welcomers and guides to those visiting the church.
- A choral foundation (of some 40 members) sings several choral services through the week, and participates in a five-day per week music education programme. Partnerships exist with several schools, neighbouring churches with a choral tradition,

and with Northamptonshire Music and Performing Arts Trust, of which All Saints is a specialist hub.

- All Saints is part of Northampton Society of Change Ringers, providing adult education courses, ringing experience, and ringing for services across four central Northampton Churches.

House, study and prayer groups:

- Choir activities listed above are complemented by annual confirmation courses for choristers and others seeking Christian initiation.
- A book group meets on a monthly basis.
- Lent study groups have formed around lunchtime services and concerts.

Areas of particular mission and ministry:

- Tourism and hospitality
- Ministry in neighbouring schools including, but not limited to, Malcolm Arnold Academy, Spring Lane School, and All Saints' CEVA Primary School
- Supportive ministry (including on-call cover) to Northampton General Hospital.
- A substantial youth ministry through the choir and the music programme, producing several high-profile figures in the church music world and nurturing musical and ministerial vocations.
- Ad hoc chaplaincy to local government organisations, sometimes formalised depending on the particular chair or mayor, together with responsibility for civic services and for maintaining good relationships with the armed forces community, both active and retired, across the county.



The Ukrainian Flag hanging from the Portico to mark the anniversary of the outbreak of war

- An ideal place for interfaith engagement, working alongside interfaith practitioners and leaders from Islamic, Sikh, Hindu, Jewish, Baha'i and Buddhist communities active in the area, and sustaining a ministry of persistent hospitality across religious difference.
- A place of recollection and remembrance for use in times of national mourning.
- Occasional collaborations with broadcasters such as the BBC. All Saints' Church produced two editions of the national online service for the Church of England in 2021.

All Saints' is among the most deprived in the country, ranking 716th of 12154 parishes.

Opportunities for development:

- Development of a more intentional form of town centre chaplaincy, that would be directly supportive of businesses and enterprise in the area and offer a supportive figure to those tackling poverty and homelessness. Offering the church to those coming to work in Northampton as a place to come together.
- Ministry to the night-time economy, working with Northampton Guardians and Northampton Street Pastors, to explore ways in which the church building and community could contribute to safer streets and the pastoral care of those who find themselves in difficulty.
- Making better use of St Peter's Church (made redundant and now in the hands of the Churches Conservation Trust) as a place of worship very close to the residential areas around the Heritage Gateway Park and Northampton Railway Station.



The Mayor of Northampton and 'King Charles' on Oak Apple Day.

- A process has begun to rebroker the Bistro franchise and to find a new tenant following the failure of the café in 2025.
- A major fundraising project is underway to complete a £700,000 programme of works in time for the church's 350th birthday in 2030.



Solemn Blessing of the Fish and Chip Shop in 2018

Areas and types of co-operation with other local churches & faith groups:

- Membership of Churches Together in Northampton. We support their foodbank and efforts.
- St Anne's Church, within the Archdiocese of Russian Orthodox Churches in Western Europe, with which there is an excellent working relationship, including shared events and worship. St Anne's often keeps Pascha at All Saints' Church.
- Northampton (Roman Catholic) Cathedral.
- Mount Pleasant Baptist Church
- Other relationships with smaller churches and ecclesial communities.

- Significant contribution to Northampton Interfaith Forum and to interreligious dialogue in the town and beyond.

The parish resolved in 2016 to send a letter of request under the House of Bishops' Declaration on the Ministry of Bishops and Priests 2014, and receives episcopal ministry from the Bishop of Richborough. The parish is committed to maintaining an honoured place for those who hold different convictions within the community, and to ensuring that those invited to preach, teach or partner with the parish reflect that intention.

All Saints: Key Challenges, Vision and Priorities

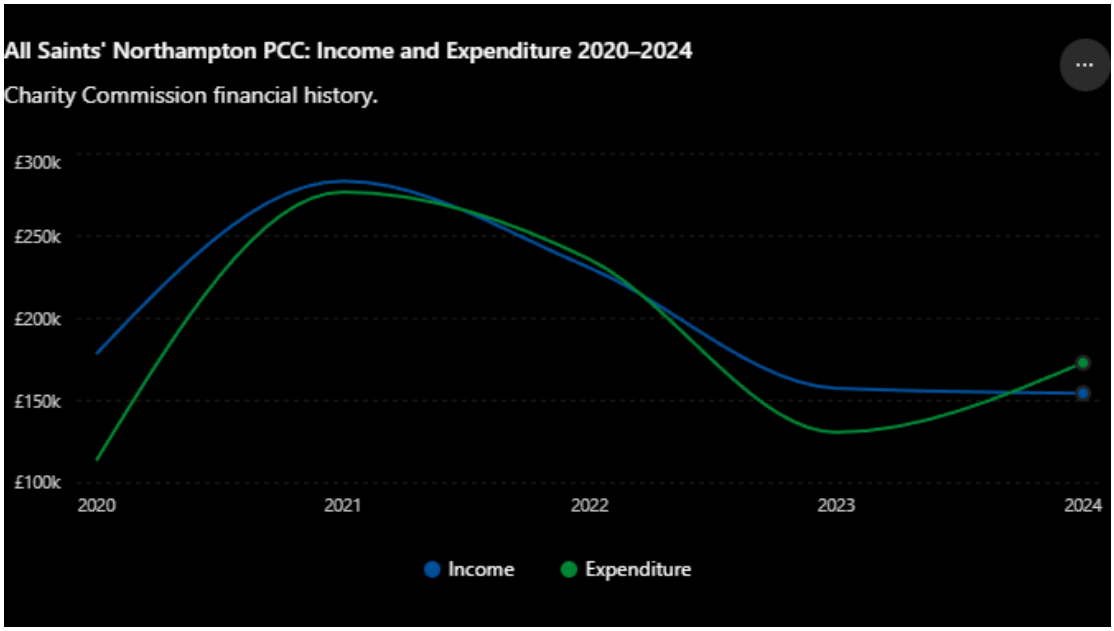
All Saints' Church understands itself as a civic church, with a distinctive liturgical ethos highly influenced by so-called Prayer Book Catholicism and Anglo-Catholicism, with an unrivalled history among its peers. Its image is often synonymous, alongside one or two other iconic buildings such as the Guildhall or the Lift Tower, with the town of Northampton itself. The history of the church reaches into the story of the demise of Anglo-Saxon Britain, and the rise of Norman Christianity. In the post-Reformation/Restoration era it became a notable rebel against Laudianism and was ministered to by significant figures in the presbyterian movement. From a far more central churchmanship for much of the twentieth century, it has spent much of the last thirty years evolving up the candle by good teaching, preaching, and gentle convincement. Today it presents a confident liturgy, eucharistically-centred, and grounded in a belief that it has a duty of hospitality to all who cross its threshold.

The primary vocation of a church is to engage fully with the whole of the parish, welcoming and serving all who live, work, worship or visit there. In a civic church where the parochial area is very small, this vocation is understood to extend across the town and county of Northampton, as well as to those who simply alight upon the church. The outworking of this vocation is expressed through the following principles:

- The daily offering of Mass and the Divine Office is at the centre of our parish life, in which God is glorified and his people are nourished on word and sacrament.
- The proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ within the local and gathered community through sound teaching and vibrant worship.
- To deepen and encourage lay leadership in the parish, and encourage vocations to lay and ordained ministry.
- To encourage serious and prayerful Christian devotion through regular Mass attendance and the development of pastoral concern within church and society.
- To make confident disciples of our young people and young adults, amid a general concern for forming missionary disciples.
- To continue to build our church upon solid social and financial foundations.
- To engage fully with the Diocese of Peterborough, and to make a positive contribution to the local church.
- To maintain our building as both a living centre of worship, and as a building of national significance.

These principles express the shared vision and priorities of the incumbent and PCC.

Financial Information



All Saints operates on a larger scale than Holy Sepulchre, with annual income around £155,000. The figures in the graph above are affected by an exceptional cash injection of around £220,000 between 2021 and 2023. This means the apparent fall in income from 2021 to 2024 is better understood as a return towards normal levels rather than a straightforward decline. The main financial issue is therefore long-term sustainability: the church's civic, liturgical and musical life brings significant ongoing costs, so continued stewardship development and a clear distinction between regular income, exceptional receipts and necessary expenditure will be important.

Holy Sepulchre: Detailed Profile

All Saints' Church and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre became constituent parts of a new benefice in 2025. Famous as one of England's few remaining Norman round churches, Holy Sepulchre shares with All Saints in the patrimony of the Norman Earls, and bears witness to the tradition of recapturing the architecture and significance of St Helena's great basilica of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. The church has the following significant assets:

- A grade-one listed building with a multi-faceted tourism and heritage draw.
- An excellent array of stained-glass windows, including one designed by Kempe.
- An 1880 pipe organ designed by John Stringer of Hanley, Stoke on Trent, which is now in urgent need of restoration. It was awarded a Grade II* Historic Organ Certificate in 2003 by the British Institute of Organ Studies.
- A small but highly dedicated worshipping community, who have worked hard during the interregnum to care for their church and their plant, not least through seeking partnerships with those who can help and support them. This is particularly

exemplified in partnerships between parish officers of the two churches, and work with the Community Payback Team who have made a substantial difference to the environment.

- A very large complex of church halls, including some that have been used as domestic accommodation, with much present social capital in serving the community, and much potential to be developed.
- Three charitable trusts that support the maintenance of the church building and the mission of the parish, including the Holy Sepulchre Restoration Trust which has raised £1.3m for the church over the course of three decades.
- A network of heritage organisations that have an interest in the broad and specific history of the church, for example the Western Front Association. The church contains the regimental chapel of the Northamptonshire Regiment, which was merged in 1960 with the Royal Lincolnshire Regiment to become the 2nd East Anglian Regiment (now known, after further mergers, as the Royal Anglian Regiment).
- A location in a part of Northampton that is preparing for imminent redevelopment, and into which there has been a growth in new residential accommodation.
- A part-time administrator, supporting dedicated wardens and volunteers, who also oversees the life of the parish halls.
- A large churchyard full of trees and flowers and natural habitats with opportunities for environmental projects.
- A local amateur community theatre group uses the church for winter performances.
- Community groups such as the Over Sixties, Over 50's Keep Fit, and Friday Friendship resident in the community halls.

Holy Sepulchre is among the most deprived in the country, ranking 580th of 12154 parishes.

Future opportunities

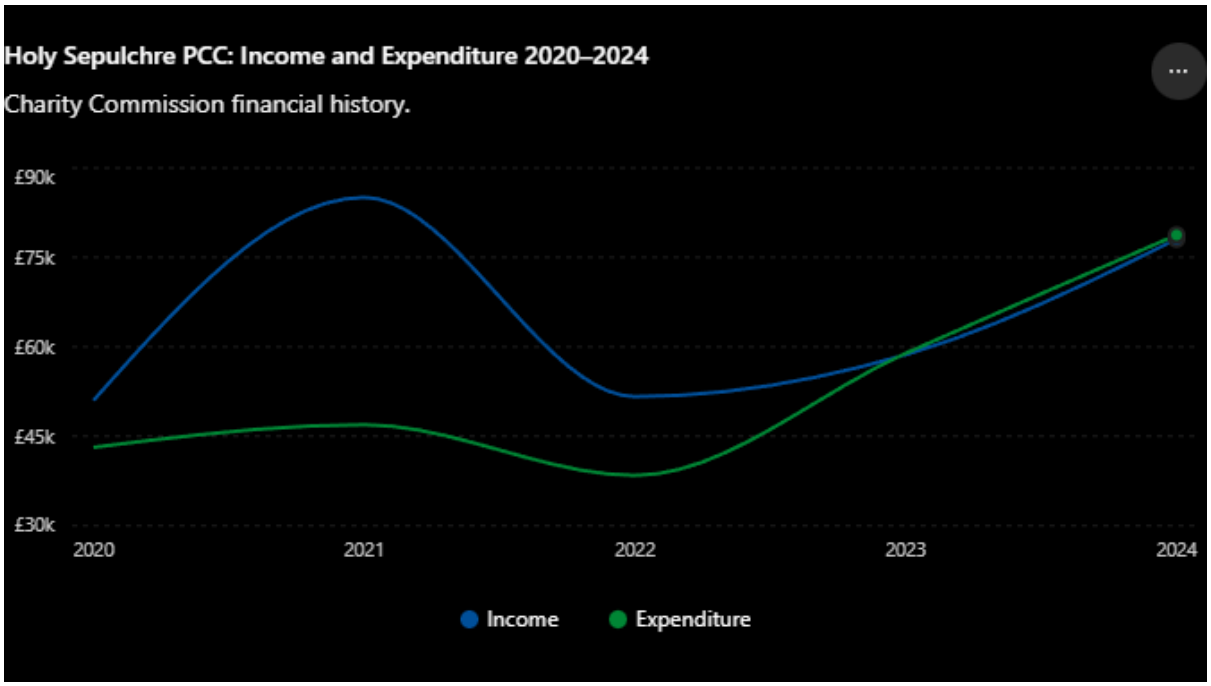
- A committed team of people are meeting regularly to consider the future of the community and building, inspired by the Five Marks of Mission and the treasures that have been entrusted to them. They are seeking to explore new ideas and ways of working.
- The church has recently been strengthening links with community and heritage organisations. It has a strong relationship with the Probation Service and West Northamptonshire Park Rangers. Links with a local school are currently being created, and the churchyard is under consideration as an active area for development.
- There is scope to renew and deepen the regular worshipping life of Holy Sepulchre, building confidence after the vacancy, strengthening the Sunday congregation, and developing patterns of prayer, pastoral care and Christian formation that are appropriate to a small but significant town-centre parish.
- The parish is well placed to develop a more coherent heritage and visitor strategy, interpreting the round church, crusader associations, stained glass, military chapel, organ and churchyard in ways that support mission, education, tourism and fundraising.
- The large hall complex offers significant potential for review and renewal, including improved community use, clearer governance, better presentation to potential users, and the possibility of income-generating partnerships that are compatible with the church's mission and values.

- The churchyard could become a stronger focus for environmental care, community volunteering, outdoor learning, quiet reflection and therapeutic use, building on existing relationships with West Northamptonshire Park Rangers, Community Payback and other local partners.
- The redevelopment of Greyfriars and the reconnection of the surrounding streets create an important opportunity for Holy Sepulchre to become more visible, more accessible and more deeply embedded in the life of a changing town-centre neighbourhood.
- There is potential to develop schools work and educational visits, particularly around the church's unusual architecture, medieval history, local military connections, churchyard ecology and the wider story of Northampton's historic churches.
- The regimental chapel and existing relationships with military and veterans' organisations offer further scope for acts of remembrance, pastoral support, heritage interpretation and partnerships rooted in the church's long association with the armed forces.
- Future fundraising will need to draw together the parish, charitable trusts, heritage partners and community stakeholders around a clear narrative of renewal: sustaining the building, serving the neighbourhood, and ensuring that Holy Sepulchre remains a living church rather than simply a historic monument.
- The team is keen to find new uses for the church and church hall, to use the space more effectively, and is presently pursuing a partnership with Northampton Hope Centre.



The Round Nave of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, with the 'modern' nave in the background.

Financial Information



Holy Sepulchre is a relatively small parish charity, with annual income usually between about £51,000 and £85,000. The 2021 figures were unusually strong because of exceptional income, creating a large surplus, but income then returned to more normal levels before recovering gradually in 2023 and 2024. Expenditure has generally been managed carefully, though small deficits in 2023 and 2024, together with a sharp rise in costs in 2024, show that continued income growth will be important if the parish is to avoid relying on reserves.



All Saints' Choir on Tour in Cascia in 2025

The Incumbent

The Reverend Canon Oliver Coss SSC has served as Rector of All Saints' Church Northampton since 2016 and, since 2025, has also taken responsibility for the historic Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Born into a military family in Germany and raised in East Anglia, Gibraltar and Lincolnshire, Father Oliver studied Internet Computing at the University of Hull before discerning a vocation to ordained ministry. Trained at the College of the Resurrection, he served in Hull and inner-city Birmingham before moving to Northampton. Alongside parish ministry, he has served as Rural Dean of Greater Northampton since 2021, is involved in civic and interfaith work, and maintains strong links with the armed forces through chaplaincy and veterans' organisations.

At the heart of Father Oliver's ministry is a vision of the parish church as both a centre of worship and a servant of the wider community. He has emphasised the Church's responsibility to engage with poverty, social need, civic life and local renewal. In Northampton he has argued that thriving towns require thriving churches, seeing the Church not as an isolated institution but as a partner in public life. His leadership combines commitment to the Anglo-Catholic tradition with practical concern for mission, heritage, education and social justice.

Vicarage and Accommodation

It is expected that the Associate Rector will be resident at 94 St George's Avenue in Northampton, situated less than a mile away from the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The property offers generous accommodation, including four bedrooms, a substantial reception and dining space, ample room for a study, and additional library or storage space in a converted attic. There is also a modest garden. The house overlooks Northampton Racecourse (which is actually a substantial urban park), giving ready access to open green space, and is very close to the Malcolm Arnold schools, making it a practical and attractive base for ministry, family life, hospitality and study.

Clergy Expenses

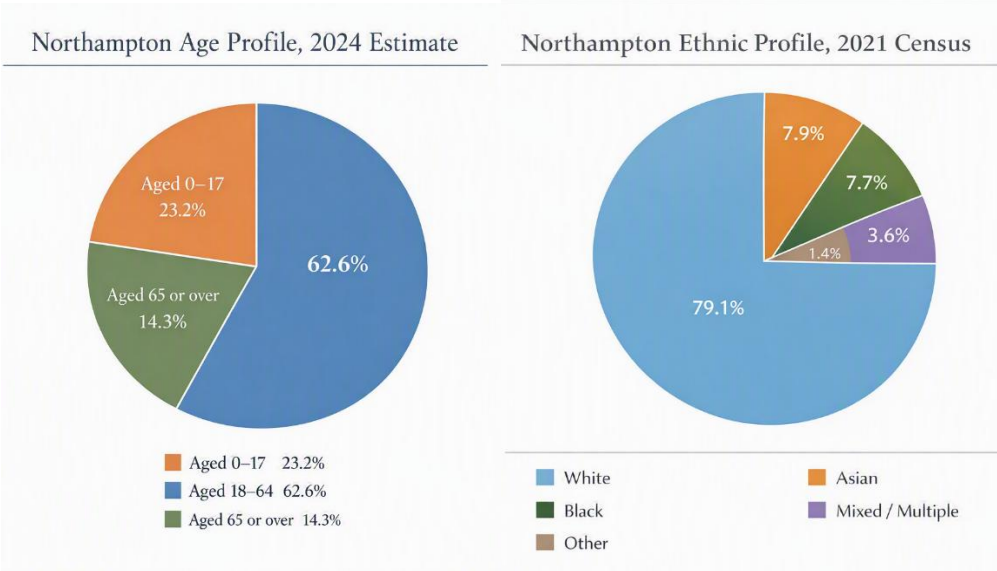
Expenses: The candidate can expect all reasonable expenses to be reimbursed, up to a nominal limit of £1,800 per annum. Business telephone calls and telephone rental will be paid in full. The Diocese is responsible for maintaining the house and paying Council Tax and Water Rates.

Locality

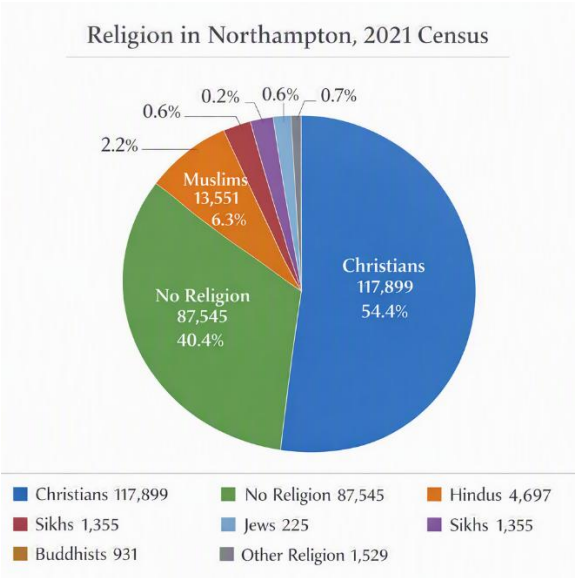
Northampton is a large and historic market town in the East Midlands, set close to the centre of England and well connected by road and rail. The Northampton built-up area had a population of 243,511 at the 2021 Census, rising from 214,888 in 2011, and was estimated at 253,499 in 2024. Fast trains connect the town with London and Birmingham in roughly an hour, with onward links to national and international destinations. The town combines a substantial urban scale with a relatively compact centre, and supports a broad civic, commercial, educational, cultural and residential life.

The town has a distinctive identity shaped by its medieval market square, historic churches, the Guildhall, shoe and leather heritage, military associations, university, schools, theatres,

museum, hospital, parks and growing residential communities. Census-based estimates show a relatively young and diverse urban population: in 2024 around 23.2% of residents were aged 0–17, 62.6% were aged 18–64 and 14.3% were aged 65 or over. In 2021, around 73.4% of residents were UK-born, while the largest broad ethnic group was White at 79.1%, followed by Asian at 7.9%, Black at 7.7%, Mixed or multiple ethnic groups at 3.6%, and other ethnic groups at 1.4%.



Northampton Forward and West Northamptonshire Council have set out an ambitious programme of town-centre renewal, including the reimagining of Market Square, improvements to Abington Street and Fish Street, the transformation of Market Walk, the creation of Marefair Heritage Park, development around Four Waterside and the station gateway, and the comprehensive redevelopment of Greyfriars.



Deanery and Diocese

The role sits within the Diocese of Peterborough and the Greater Northampton Deanery. The Diocese covers Northamptonshire, Peterborough and Rutland, bringing together parishes, church schools, chaplaincies, lay and ordained ministries, diocesan boards and central teams in the service of local mission. It is led by the Bishop of Peterborough, the Right Reverend Debbie Sellin, assisted by the Bishop of Brixworth Alex Hughes. The benefice falls within the Archdeaconry of Northampton, and the Rector presently serves as Rural Dean of Greater Northampton, placing this appointment in a close relationship between parish, deanery and diocese.

The mission partnership between All Saints and Holy Sepulchre is part of the wider implementation of the Northampton Deanery Plan. It belongs not simply to the aspirations of two neighbouring parishes, but to a diocesan and deanery strategy for sustainable ministry, renewed worshipping life and more collaborative use of clergy, lay leadership, buildings and financial resources. The Associate Rector will be expected to participate actively in Greater Northampton Deanery Chapter, build constructive relationships with colleagues in parish and chaplaincy settings, and help the benefice discern how its town-centre vocation serves the wider mission of the deanery.

The Diocese of Peterborough is articulating an emerging vision and strategy under the headings "Raise – Release – Renew". Its proposed outcomes include doubling the number of children and young people in churches, doubling lay and ordained vocations, strengthening deaneries, creating new sustainable worshipping communities, and establishing financially and practically sustainable models of ministry. These priorities resonate strongly with this appointment: leadership in Christian initiation and discipleship, vocations, schools and youth engagement, lay ministry, worship and pastoral care, and a mission partnership marked by sustainability, generosity and shared purpose.

The wider diocesan structures are also important. The appointment will relate to episcopal and archidiaconal oversight through the Bishop of Peterborough, the Bishop-designate of Brixworth and the Archdeacon of Northampton; to synodical and deanery structures through Greater Northampton Deanery; and to diocesan teams concerned with mission, growth, generous giving, children and youth, vocations and training, church schools, safeguarding, communications, the DAC and historic churches. These resources will matter in a benefice whose mission includes major heritage buildings, town-centre poverty, schools work, civic engagement, music and the arts, ecumenical and interfaith partnerships, and new patterns of worshipping and community life.

Within this framework, the contribution of All Saints and Holy Sepulchre is distinctive. All Saints brings civic visibility, a daily rhythm of prayer and worship, a substantial choral and educational ministry, and a public role in Northampton and the county. Holy Sepulchre brings an ancient and nationally significant building, a faithful local congregation, a large estate of halls and churchyard, military and heritage connections, and a strategic position beside town-centre

redevelopment. Together they offer a credible setting in which diocesan priorities can be embodied locally: raising up disciples and vocations, releasing clergy and lay capacity through partnership, and renewing ministry through sustainable, outward-facing worship, welcome, mission and service.

And finally…

This is a demanding but deeply hopeful appointment, offering the right priest the opportunity to help shape a new chapter in the life of two remarkable Northampton churches. It calls for prayerfulness, imagination, resilience and practical wisdom: a willingness to honour what has been faithfully received, to work collaboratively with clergy and lay colleagues, and to help renew worship, mission, pastoral care, heritage, community engagement and sustainable ministry in the heart of the town. We hope this profile conveys something of the seriousness, complexity and promise of the role, and we would be glad to hear from those who feel called to explore it further.

Candidates who believe they may be called to this ministry are warmly invited to make contact for an informal and confidential conversation before applying. We would welcome the opportunity to speak with priests who recognise both the challenge and the promise of this post, and who may feel drawn to serve within a benefice where **historic inheritance**, **civic responsibility**, **pastoral need** and **missionary possibility** meet in a distinctive way.

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