



Working with us in the Diocese of Lincoln

Clergy recruitment pack
2026

Warden of Edenham Retreat House &
Assistant Priest of Edenham, Witham
on the Hill & Swinstead (House for
Duty)

Lincoln.anglican.org

This post is subject to Safer Recruitment & People Management Guidance

The Society Mission Partnership

The Society LMP (SLMP) is a grouping of Parishes within the County of Lincolnshire and constitutes a Local Mission Partnership (LMP) within the Diocese. At the invitation of the Bishop of Lincoln, the Parishes receive pastoral and sacramental oversight from the Bishop of Richborough who is one of the Society Bishops. The Bishop of Richborough and the Society Parishes in Lincolnshire have worked closely with the leadership team in the Diocese to form a non-geographical LMP so that Society parishes can live out their distinctive catholic witness in cooperation with their neighbouring LMPs and legally constituted Deaneries.



Time To Change Together (TTCT) has provided the opportunity for the Society Parishes to join in careful stewarding and sustainable giving in order to more readily focus on catholic mission, worship and service within our communities whilst seeking to uphold the Church of England's commitment to diversity and mutual flourishing. Alongside our participation in existing Deanery and Diocesan structures, we hope to form a council of lay and ordained representatives to help oversee and steer the LMP, maintain good relationships and communication, and enjoy opportunities to worship together and resource one another.

Our congregations and clergy are exceedingly grateful to the Diocese for having supported the SLMP initiative and we are very much aware that it is now up to us to make good the considerable trust that has been invested in us. We hope that potential candidates considering the position of Warden of Edenham Regional House and Assistant Priest will see SLMP as an exciting opportunity to work closely with colleagues, both lay and ordained, within the LMP and across the Deaneries and Diocese to serve God's people, grow his Church and maintain our distinctive witness to his love in Christ Jesus.

Fr Edward Martin (Chair of SLMP Council and Clerical Chair of Lincoln Forward in Faith)



Local Mission Partnership Map

ACROSS THE LMP WE HAVE

- 4 Stipended Clergy Posts
- 1 House for Duty post
- 2 Licensed Lay Readers
- 11 Retired Clergy with PTO
- 1 Authorised Lay Minister

Introduction

THE HOUSE

Edenham Regional House (renamed 'Edenham Retreat House and Meeting Place' in 2023) was established some 30 years ago as part of what was then a network of 'Regional Houses' providing places of spirituality and hospitality across the Diocese of Lincoln. Thanks to its strength of leadership and community support, it has thrived and continues to serve well in its role.

The Edenham Regional House Trust was created in 1995 to formalise the governance arrangements of the House at Edenham, with Trustees representing the interests of the Benefice in which the House is situated, the Diocese of Lincoln and the Grimsthorpe Estate (which is still both landlord of the Vicarage and one of the three patrons of the Benefice). The Trust remains in place today, with the House run on a day-to-day basis by a Warden and a management committee, overseen by the board of Trustees and supported by a Friends Group.



THE BENEFICE

Edenham Vicarage is located on the A151, immediately next door to the parish church, three miles west of Bourne and nine miles from the A1. The parish of Edenham is part of the United Benefice of St Michael and All Angels, Edenham; St Mary's, Swinstead, and St Andrew's, Witham on the Hill - a traditional Anglo-Catholic Eucharistic community of three small rural parishes with a combined population of 1113 (2021 census).

The parishes have passed resolutions requesting that arrangements be made for them in accordance with the House of Bishops' Declaration on the Ministry of Bishops and Priests. As such, pastoral care is provided by the Bishop of Richborough, but with close ties to the Diocese of Lincoln.



WHY HAS THE CURRENT VACANCY ARISEN?

The current incumbent is Vicar of the United Benefice and Warden of the Retreat House. However, last year, following a Diocesan re-organisation he took on responsibility for an Anglo-Catholic parish in Stamford, (eleven miles south) and has recently taken on parochial responsibility for another four parishes in the local area. With these additional parochial duties, his role as Warden is clearly no longer sustainable.

Following a review with the Bishop of Lincoln, the Trustees have worked to clarify the position and develop a vision for the future mission and ministry of the House.



Vision for the future of the house

Edenham Vicarage shares a beautiful Georgian building and large wooded gardens with Edenham Retreat House. It is a peaceful and tranquil place, steeped in prayerfulness and rooted in its local community. The Grimsthorpe Estate is closely involved with the House and leases the Vicarage to the Trustees on a peppercorn rent, thus supporting the ministry of the benefice and the House.

In a large diocese with an aspiration to 'raise the spiritual temperature', to encourage all to discern and develop their gifts and to promote locally based training, Edenham is a ready-made resource, with flexible meeting spaces and residential accommodation.

The Trustees see the House as a centre and meeting place for worship, fellowship and Christian learning - a place of retreat and quiet days. A place of hospitality which is flexible and open requires 'presence', so it is hoped to appoint an ordained House for Duty Warden. The appointee will also be licensed as Assistant Priest, serving in the benefice under the oversight of the current incumbent.

For the church and parishioners, this would sustain locally based priestly ministry. For the House, it would help maintain the close association currently enjoyed with the parish church and the local community.



Trustees believe that whoever is appointed as Warden needs to build on the past history of the House and to nurture Edenham as a place of prayer, spiritual renewal and retreat. He will act as a 'presence' in the House, overseeing the ongoing life of the House on a daily basis and ensuring that its rhythm of prayer and worship is maintained and developed. Collaborating closely with the diocese and others, he will develop Edenham as a meeting place, particularly for parishes in the south of the diocese and as a venue for quiet days, retreats, training events and as a community of hospitality rooted in the life of the parishes.



As it develops, there is clearly potential for the House to act as a centre for spiritual direction or as a 'House for Hope'. It is also possible that it could also act as a home for, or alignment with, a religious community.

Although the parishes have asked for pastoral oversight from the Bishop of Richborough, the policy of the Retreat House is to be open to everyone. Visitors of any Christian denomination or tradition are welcome to use the House and Chapel for prayer and worship and women are welcome to preside. Groups or individuals who use the House on a Friday are invited to attend the Chapel Eucharist at noon, presided over by one of the House team, drawn largely from retired clergy in the Local Mission Partnership. The Friday Eucharist is followed by a 'Bring Your Own' lunch to which all are welcome.

The Benefice

The Benefice of Edenham, Witham on the Hill and Swinstead comprises three Churches and includes several additional hamlets that form the ecclesiastical Parishes alongside the main villages. The villages form part of the Grimsthorpe Estate, and the populations (c.200 per village) are largely settled and multi-generational.

The congregations worship in a 'Prayer-Book catholic' style with the Parish Eucharist following Common Worship Order One with some enrichment from other Western liturgical sources. St Andrew's Witham-on-the-Hill has a more defined Anglo-catholic history, reflected in its furnishings and its use of incense on particular Feast Days. Traditional language is preferred at Swinstead. A version of the CW Lectionary featuring the English Standard Version of the Bible (ESV) is used across the Parishes on Sundays and a Mass setting composed by the previous Incumbent's brother (Patrick Hawes) is used for sung services.

Although there is a successful Prep School at Witham (Witham Hall School) and a Church Primary at Edenham (Edenham Primary School) very few children currently reside in the villages themselves. The incumbent leads three acts of Collective Worship in the schools each week and candidates for Confirmation are prepared after Easter in anticipation of the Bishop of Richborough visiting to Confirm early in Trinitytide.

The Incumbent also oversees St Mary's Stamford and the neighbouring the Bythams Group of Parishes (with that relationship due to be formalised sometime in 2026). Holy Week is shared across the two Benefice groupings (Edenham and the Bythams) with additional Lenten activities planned for next year. For the past two years the Retreat House has hosted midweek Deanery Lenten evenings overseen by the Rural Dean Stephen Buckman.



All Churches in the Diocese of Lincoln have been invited to identify their distinctive calling using four types.

Under the categorisation of TTCT:

- Edenham, Witham on the Hill and Stamford St Mary are **Local Mission Churches**
- Swinstead is a **Community Church**

Local Mission Churches: these provide a focus for worship, mission, and belonging.



Community Churches: these provide local centres for prayer and worship.

Example Service Rota

The rota illustrates the recent service pattern across the benefice.

Churches	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5
Witham on the Hill	09.30 PE	09.30 PE	09.30 PE	09.30 PE	09.30 GE
Edenham	11.15 Eu	11.15 Eu	11.15 Eu	11.15 Eu	09.30 GE
Swinstead		09.30 PE			09.30 GE

KEY

PE

Parish Eucharist

GE

Group Eucharist - taken on a rotational basis on the 5th Sunday

OTHER SERVICES

The policy of the Benefice is for baptisms to take place during the main Sunday service but involvement in other occasional offices such as Weddings and Funerals will be on a voluntary basis.

Evening Prayer is said on Sundays at 16:00 in the Stable Chapel at Edenham Retreat House, except in the summer months when the service takes place in the Chapel of Grimsthorpe Castle. On Fridays and Saturdays there is a Holy Communion service at midday in the Stable Chapel. The weekday offices are said in the Stable chapel, currently using the Book of Common Prayer.

As an appointee on a House for Duty basis, the Warden/Assistant Priest will have half a day devoted to leading Sunday worship. As such he will not be able to lead all services on a Sunday. However it is expected that the person appointed will be flexible and share in the normal Sunday rotas across the Benefice. It should also be noted that in addition to the United benefice of Edenham, Witham and Swinstead, the current incumbent has pastoral responsibility for the parishes of Castle Bytham, Little Bytham, Careby and Creeton and that these parishes are also part of the worship schedule for which the incumbent is responsible.

Edenham Retreat House

ACCOMMODATION CLERGY ACCOMMODATION AND PUBLIC SPACES

In 2018 the layout of Edenham Vicarage was altered so that the clergy accommodation was completely separate from the public spaces used by the Retreat House.

The clergy accommodation is accessed from an entrance in the Courtyard and comprises a Sitting room with doors onto the garden, a Kitchen, Utility room, Cloakroom and Dining room on the ground floor. In the Dining room there is an oil fired Aga which the diocese is committed to servicing. On the first floor there are four Bedrooms and two Bathrooms.



The public spaces used by the Retreat House are accessed through the original front door of the building. They comprise, on the ground floor, an Entrance hall, a large Sitting room, Toilets, Dining room and dedicated Kitchen, together with the Stable Chapel, a small garden office reached through the Chapel, a Summerhouse and extensive gardens. The Coach House, situated on the ground floor next door to the Chapel, provides en-suite accommodation adapted for wheelchair users and consists of twin beds, a Kitchenette and a Wet room. It is accessed through the Courtyard. There is also a separate Boiler room, shared with the clergy accommodation, which is reached through the Retreat House.



On the first floor there is an Office, a Bed/Sitting room and Bathroom; and on the second floor, four Bedrooms - two of which are en-suite, a Bathroom and a Sitting room with a Kitchenette and Dining area.



THE ROLE

- The person appointed as Warden will be licensed as Warden and Assistant Priest to the Edenham Benefice, but may be licenced to other benefices under the care of the Vicar of Edenham. He will be known as Warden and Assistant Priest of the Edenham Benefice.
- The appointment will be on a House for Duty basis (2.5 days/week: 0.5 leading Sunday worship and 2.0 as Warden).
- The appointee will reside in the vicarage part of the ERH property under the terms of the Trustees' tenancy agreement with the Grimsthorpe & Drummond Castle Trust, but with all other aspects of a stipendiary post (Council tax, Lincoln Offer, etc.) being provided by the diocese.
- It will be at the discretion of the post holder how the 2 days per week as Warden will be spread across the week, though with the expectation that there is a break of at least 1.5 days each week.
- It is expected that the appointee will work with others to ensure that the House feels open and that there is 'presence' in the House.
- The appointee will succeed to the ex officio ERH Trustee position currently held by the current incumbent, who will then cease to be a Trustee



Our Pledge, Your Qualities

ESSENTIAL QUALITIES

- A person of prayer with a track record of overseeing and promoting spirituality, training and personal development
- Clear experience of adult learning and ability to model this to others
- Ability to network, make connections and build partnerships
- Willingness to work with others to develop and contribute to the Diocesan objective of 'Raising the Spiritual Temperature'
- Ability to manage staff and volunteers in a collaborative manner
- A person who understands and values the ministry of hospitality
- Proven ability to discern and help people to grow in their discipleship and find their vocations.
- Understands and is committed to good safeguarding practice, equality, diversity and inclusion; Able to embed good practice in the life of the parishes and seeking to protect the most vulnerable in our communities.
- Committed to maintaining their own spiritual growth by giving time to study, prayer and training
- Is able to drive and has daily access to a vehicle.

DESIRABLE QUALITIES

- A priest who is a member of The Society under the patronage of Saint Wilfred and Saint Hilda
- Entrepreneurial and open to new ideas
- Demonstrable love and interest in rural life and community

We seek a parish priest who is fully committed to the mutual flourishing of all traditions in the Church of England, but is willing to collaborate with Society priests within Resolution parishes and eligible to join the Society.



Welcome and help the priest and if applicable the priest's family settle in and become part of the community



Experienced colleagues on the Trustee body to provide oversight and determine policy



A Management Committee providing day to day help and support and ensuring close contact with the estate and local communities



A Friends Group involved in fundraising and practical support



Support the Warden in taking regular days off and annual leave.



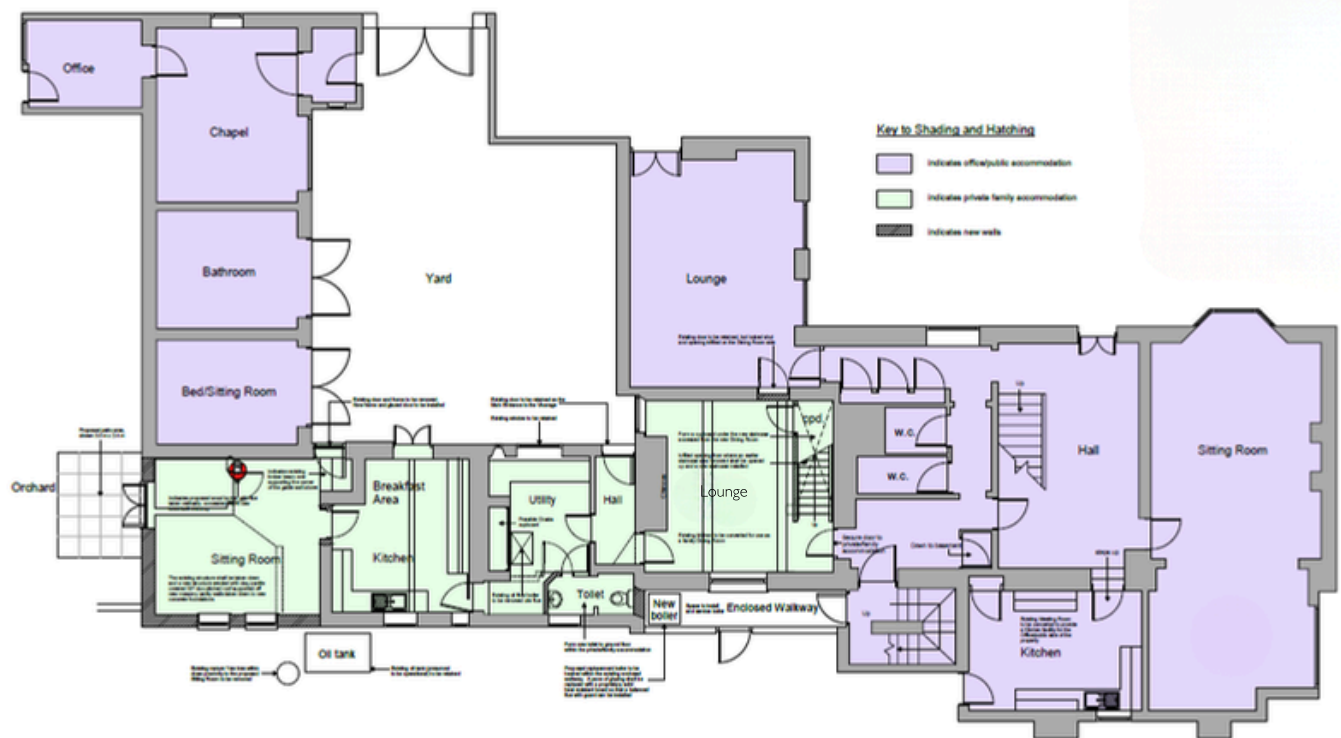
Support the Warden if he wishes to take an annual retreat.

The Retreat House

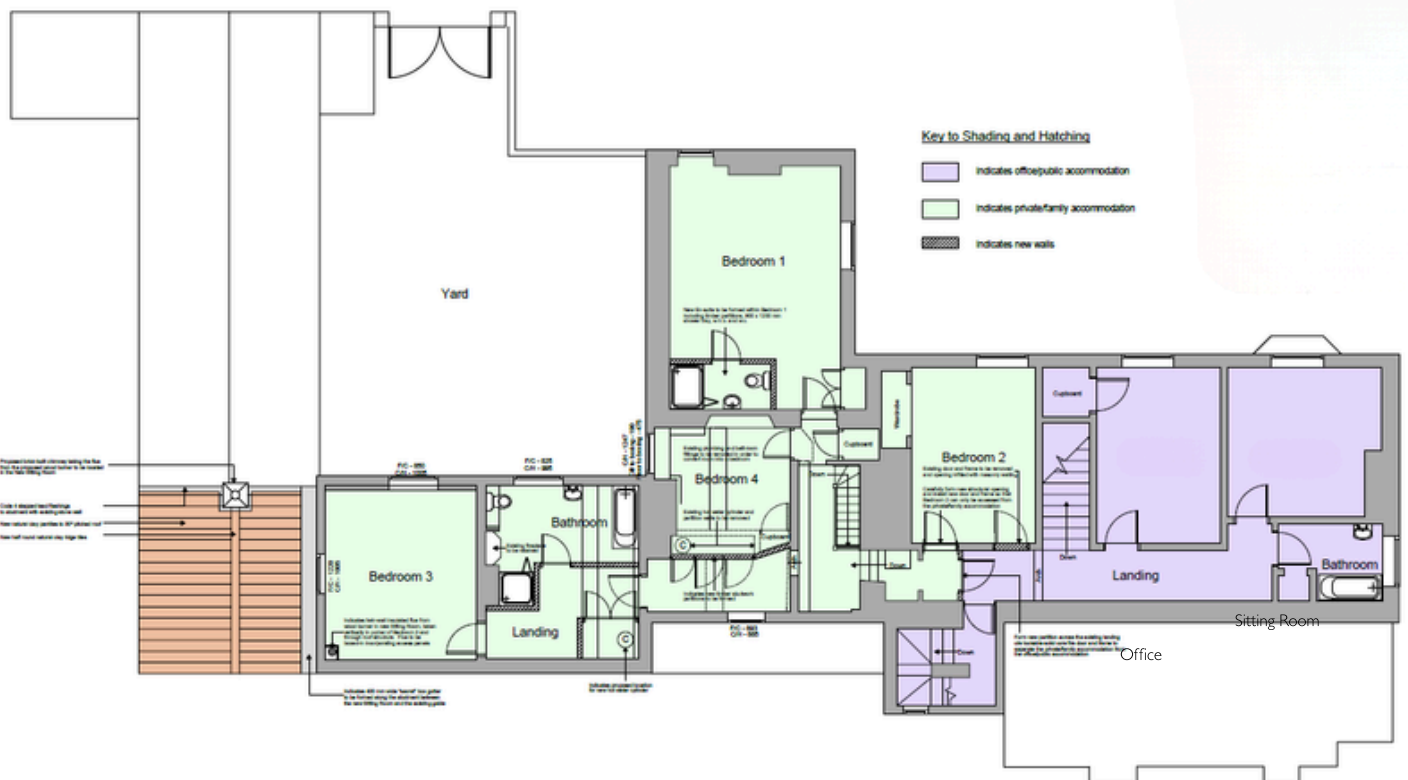
And Your Family Home

- Separate family accommodation comprising 4 bedrooms
- 1 family and 1 ensuite bathroom
- Gardening maintenance (lincoln offer)
- Oil central Heating
- Fully maintained family accommodation
- Dedicated diocesan property team for family accommodation



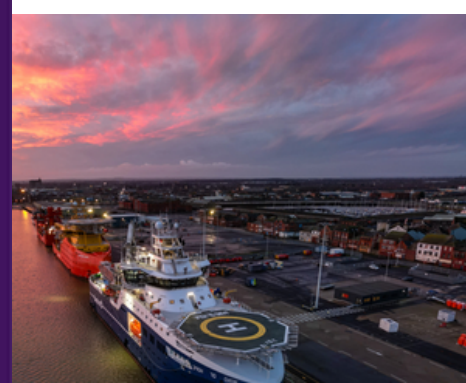


Ground Floor



First Floor

2nd Floor comprises of further retreat accommodation



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