

**NORTH SAMFORD BENEFICE**  
*(Interim Name)*

**BENEFICE PROFILE**



**All Saints', Sproughton**

**St Mary's, Belstead**



**St. Peter's,  
Copdock with Washbrook**



**St. Mary the Virgin, Burstall**



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# THE BENEFICE

## Introduction

The new North Samford Benefice consists of four village parishes to the South and West of Ipswich: Belstead, Burstall, Copdock with Washbrook, and Sproughton. These parishes were previously together for 12 years in the North Samford Benefice along with those of Bentley and Tattingstone which have moved to an adjacent Benefice.

The newly formed North Samford Benefice lies close to Ipswich and just north of the county border between Essex and Suffolk. The parishes are close to Constable Country, the coast and areas of outstanding natural beauty whilst being just over an hour away from London Liverpool Street Station with a regular rail service from Ipswich.

Ipswich is within easy reach of Colchester, Bury St. Edmunds, Newmarket, Cambridge and Norwich as well as the traditional and popular Suffolk coastal towns and villages of Aldeburgh, Southwold, Snape, Dunwich and Walberswick.

Suffolk is a beautiful county with a magnificent coastline, heaths and open countryside that is treasured by residents and visitors alike.

Ipswich is the county town wherein changes and rejuvenation are taking place.

## Ministry Team

We are blessed with an enthusiastic, very active retired PTO priest who regularly leads services throughout the Benefice. One Lay Reader (Burstall).

Eight Lay Elders (Burstall - 2, Belstead - 1, Copdock - 5).

One Local Leader (Sproughton).

Regular ministry team meetings across the Benefice were held before the interregnum.

## We can offer:

- A new benefice in which to minister.
- Parishes that are creative and open to new ideas.
- Parishes with a strong commitment to work together.
- Assured support for your ministry.
- Calm and welcoming churches.
- Opportunities to develop your ministry and create growth of the churches.
- Full support in Governance matters.

## **The Person we hope for:**

- A person to fill this 0.5 post – 3 weekdays and Sundays.
- An active person with a calling and a passion for rural ministry.
- Someone who will lead the benefice both spiritually and as an organisation.
- Someone recognising the need for both traditional and more informal worship.
- A person who will seek to develop a collaborative ministry of all church members and the Ministry Team.
- A priest who engages in, and promotes, wider pastoral activity.
- Someone who wants to engage with young people and children.
- Someone with a desire to grow the churches and work with the adjacent benefice.
- Someone who will visibly engage with the local community.
- A person willing to undertake a spiritual adventure with us.

## **Benefice Strengths, Weaknesses and Opportunities**

### **Strengths**

- Ministry Team and others will welcome you and work with you.
- Strong support for Church Festivals from village communities.
- Very strong links with our two schools.
- Good relationships with village organisations and Parish Councils.
- Church buildings in good condition.
- Excellent benefice administrator, and strong support.
- 2 primary schools.

### **Weaknesses**

- Elderly congregations.
- Lay ministry not evenly spread across the benefice.

### **Opportunities**

- To collaborate in the formation and vision of a new benefice.
- To grow the churches both younger and in number.
- To work closely with the adjacent benefice of Chapel St. Mary with Great Wenham (Rev Sally Letman).

# ALL SAINTS' SPROUGHTON

Situated in the heart of this historic village, just 3 miles West of Ipswich, the Church enjoys a beautiful setting alongside the river Gipping, opposite the picturesque watermill but with easy access to the A14. A short stroll takes you past the ancient Tithe Barn, which houses the busy Community Shop and leads up to the Church Hall. The village is expanding with large estates of new housing on the periphery, having the potential to double or treble the size of the village.



The regular congregation is small; 20-35 mainly older people. However, the congregation swells on festival occasions to 100 or more of all ages. Many long-term residents of the village hold a special place in their hearts for the Church and value their life moments being marked there.

We offer something on every Sunday from a traditional morning Holy Communion, evening Zoom service (with the Benefice), a more accessible morning service we call Sunday Morning Together, and an afternoon Tea Break Church, which is very informal and aimed at families with children. We also provide a said Communion service on the first Wednesday of the month at 8am. The Church has a modern Hall which is used for midweek activities including a weekly toddler group, monthly afternoon teas, and a quarterly morning market. The Hall is available for hire to the general public.

We have a very good relationship with the local Church Primary School where a small team from the Church are able to 'Open the Book' in assembly every fortnight. Two Church attendees are Governors. The school ask us to host their important events in the Church where we can accommodate the 100 children and their significant adults.



There is strong and experienced band of bellringers who announce the Sunday services as well as marking local and national events.



The Church is very blessed to have a retired

PTO priest who, along with his wife, are very active. He offers Holy Communion in the Benefice, conducts marriages and funerals as well as pastorally caring for the Sproughton community. We have two Church Wardens, one of whom was a minister in a Baptist Church. With the permission of the previous incumbent, he is able to conduct the Sunday Morning Together service and with others takes a lead role in Tea Break Church. The Wardens are well supported by a small but committed PCC. The big challenge for the Church is to work out how we take the message to the new residents, some of whom will be 2 miles away from the village centre in the new houses. We aspire to make the church relevant to as many parishioners as possible. The ability to offer the Christian message in a contemporary way, giving the Holy Spirit the opportunity to work is the prayer for the future.

## ST PETER'S COPDOCK

St Peter's Church stands at the highest point of the village, proudly set against the skyline and beautifully complements the Tudor barn opposite. It is a grade 2\* listed building.



Our ethos and reputation is all about being welcoming and inclusive, whether you are a villager, visiting priest, or bride and groom. There are between 20 and 40 parishioners at each of our weekly services, with 80 plus at special services. The village school has at least four activities and services a year with 80 children and a similar number of parents. All told we have over 5,000 visits a year.

We want everyone to feel welcome and included.

Our church family is an integral part of village life and members of the church, in their different ways, participate in most of the activities.

A Church has existed on the site of St Peter's since the 11<sup>th</sup> century, with the present church being built in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries. The main entrance is through a south porch, the stepped gable of which was added in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, with a sundial erected in 1935 to commemorate the Jubilee of George V.

It is a simple one aisled church with a later transept to the north. Its greatest external feature, the fine tower with its attractive west door, was built in 1478. This tower holds a peal of six bells, the earliest of which was made in 1614. The north door also dates back to 15<sup>th</sup> century. The North transept wooden roof still retains the 15<sup>th</sup> century leaf and flower trusses.

A new toilet has just been built in the tower of the church, and our beautiful 15<sup>th</sup> century font (recut in 19<sup>th</sup> century), with an attractive Victorian wooden cover, has been moved and now proudly sits in the North transept.

St Peter's is a much-loved and cared for church, and it shows.

We see our fund-raising activities as, not just raising money for the church, but also reaching out and adding to village life as a whole, whether it is our monthly morning market with 20 people, our plant sale, to our Christmas market in Copdock Hall with over 300 people from the village. We pay our parish share in full. Equally individuals give support, for example, from giving lifts to hospital, to telephone support, to opening the tennis court once a week for the refugees trapped in the hotel (little things make big differences).

If you were to join us we would welcome and share our faith with you.



Nativity Service



School Easter Service



Harvest Supper



Christmas Market

## ST. MARY'S, BELSTEAD



Belstead is a small village of around 100 houses, one mile from the Ipswich boundary. The Church and the Village Hall are the only amenities in the village.

Set apart from the village near to Belstead Hall, the 14<sup>th</sup> Century Grade 2\* listed church of St Mary the Virgin has some interesting features including a painted Roodscreen dating from the late 1400's. Like much church decoration the Roodscreen was damaged during the Reformation and at the time of the Puritans but was professionally repaired and conserved six years ago.

The church was saved from threatened closure in 2005 as a result of a village campaign to keep it open and it has continued to attract a regular congregation. Services are held monthly with an annual carol service as well as services to mark the usual festivals.

We are currently fund raising for a new toilet block and servery to provide much-needed facilities and improve our ability to raise income by promoting concerts and events. Those held in the past have been reasonably well attended and we are hopeful that attendances will grow when our building project has been completed.

## ST MARY THE VIRGIN, BURSTALL

The 14<sup>th</sup> Century grade 1 listed Church of St Mary is centrally placed in the main street of this rural village. It is close to the Village Hall built in 1910. There is no village school.



We have a small group of committed people who worship regularly and participate in maintaining regular weekly worship and upkeep of the building. We have one Lay Reader and two Lay Elders who share taking the services. We are welcoming to all and our church is open every day for quiet reflection. We are a regular stop on countryside cycling routes and for walkers.

Our aim is to include the village community by making sure that the church remains a centre-point for community activity; encouraging residents to have ownership of the church by arranging exhibitions and fundraising, which villagers will enjoy contributing to. A recent wedding exhibition in the church displayed over twenty wedding dresses lent by parishioners. We use the Church and churchyard for fundraising activities whenever possible, enabling us to share our beautiful church with the wider community. Villagers, who do not attend services, still help regularly with flower arranging and cleaning.



Community coffee mornings and children's craft sessions are well attended. The Church porch is decorated with craft items at Christmas, Easter, Harvest and Remembrance.

The church is well attended at Festival Services. An invitation is delivered to each house for Special Services and fundraising events. A Welcome Booklet is delivered to new residents.

Congregation members are involved in other village activities such as WI, Carpet Bowls and Village Hall activities. We hope to have a finger on the pulse of those in need of pastoral care within the village, which is always a PCC agenda item.

Our PCC is small and although we have been unable to pay our parish share in full since the beginning of the pandemic, nevertheless we have been able to increase our contributions year on year. We hope that our new Priest-in-charge will be someone who can help us continue to reach out to the wider community, balancing the needs of older parishioners with the task of attracting younger adults and children.





## SERVICES

### The present pattern:

	Time	Church	Service	Average Attendance
<b>WEEK 1</b>	9.30am	Burstall	HC - CW	12 adults
	10.00am	Copdock	Morning Prayer	24 adults 2 children
	11.00 am	Sproughton	Sunday Morning Together	20 – 35 adults
Wednesday	8.00am	Sproughton	HC - BCP	4 adults
<b>WEEK 2</b>	8.00am	Copdock	HC - BCP	10 adults
	9.30am	Burstall	Morning Prayer	12 adults
	10.00am	Copdock	Morning Prayer	24 adults 2 children
Benefice	6.00pm	Zoom	Evening Prayer	
<b>WEEK 3</b>	9.30am	Burstall	Celtic Morning Prayer	12 adults
	10.00am	Copdock	Simply Sunday	24 adults 2 children
	11.00am	Sproughton	HC - CW	20 – 35 adults
<b>WEEK 4</b>	9.30am	Burstall	Family Service	12 adults 1 child
	10.00am	Belstead	Morning Celebration	20 adults
	10.00 am.	Copdock	HC - CW	24 adults, 2 children
	3.30pm	Sproughton	Tea Break Church	10 adults 5 children
<b>WEEK 5 (Benefice)</b>	10.00am	Variable	HC - CW	

### Occasional Offices

The benefice has 17 weddings booked in 2023.

There were 14 funerals and 6 baptisms in 2022.

### Benefice-wide services

In addition to the fifth Sunday, services are held on Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday; World Day of Prayer and a bereavement service are also held.

## GOVERNANCE

Each parish has two Churchwardens and all have an active PCC.

## FINANCE

In 2022 the four parishes contributed £40,000 (80%) of their combined allocation of £49,855 towards the previous full-time incumbent.

It is expected that the Benefice will work closely with an adjoining one which

Likewise has a 0.5 priest in charge, Capel St. Mary with Great Wenham.

## ADMINISTRATION

We are retaining our part-time administrator from the previous, larger, benefice. She is invaluable, works mostly from home but spends one morning a week in the benefice office in Sroughton Church Hall.

The parishes' allocations towards the administrator and other benefice expenses have always been met in full.

### Administrator

Current tasks undertaken by our administrator include:

#### 1) General

- Together with the priest, a primary contact for the benefice.
- Production of pew sheets, service sheets and similar material.
- Quarterly returns to Diocesan Board of Finance.
- Administration of Benefice account – receipts, payments, reconciliation.
- Administration of expenses claims.
- Production of copy for local magazine.
- CCLI licencing and coordination.
- Sourcing priests for services.
- Delivery of material to parishes.
- Maintaining Benefice Facebook page.
- Minute taking at benefice meetings.

#### 2) Weddings

- Initial enquiries.
- Liaison with couple throughout.
- Maintaining calendar for Banns.
- Maintaining calendar of weddings.
- Arranging organist, choir, bells.
- Invoicing and disbursement of fees to parishes, DBF.
- Checking ID of couples when necessary.

#### 3) Funerals and memorials

- Liaison with funeral directors and stonemasons.
- Completing Diocesan forms.
- Invoicing and disbursement of fees.

# ACCOMMODATION

## The Rectory



The Rectory is positioned in the village of Sproughton and is the home for the Benefice priest in charge. It is situated in a quiet residential area of the village close to the church.

Built in the early 1970's, it is centrally heated with 4 bedrooms, bathroom with shower, sitting room, dining room, kitchen, utility room and downstairs cloakroom. All utility services are connected. There is a room at the front of the house used by the priest as an office with access that does not require entering the family area.

There is a garage attached and the large garden to the front, side and rear is mainly laid to lawn with some fruit trees.

# THE SAMFORD DEANERY

## Message from the Rural Dean

Samford Deanery is a small deanery comprising five benefices and a total of 19 parishes. Historically, the deanery was designated as a group, at that time, to be able to appoint a part time deanery training officer. Today it means that we can be a little more inventive about how we act as a Deanery.

As ordained and lay people together, we seek to attend to the needs of our deanery and develop mission in an organic way, open our varied benefice activities to each other and organise a yearly deanery marriage preparation day.

We have written a new deanery plan in the context of *Growing in God*, the Diocesan growth strategy. This is a living document which will be updated regularly.

Chapter is made up of the incumbents in the deanery. We are committed to active participation at our monthly meetings and mutual support.

Deanery synod meets three times per year and is seen as a seedbed for mission. Speakers are invited to our meetings to share their expertise in the context of mission and inspire members to reflect on the subject at hand for their own parish or benefice context.

Synod welcomes all who are interested in the subject of the evening regardless of whether they are parish representatives.

As a deanery we are excited to find out about the gifts and talents you will bring to enrich our collective mission and ministry.

*Brian C Rogerson, Lay Chair*  
*Revd Jenny Seggar, Acting Rural Dean*

# THE DIOCESE OF ST. EDMUNDSBURY AND IPSWICH

## Where are we?

The Diocese covers the county of Suffolk, excluding the area around Lowestoft in the north-east, and one parish in Essex. It is a mainly rural Diocese with a large number of small villages, plus market towns including Woodbridge, Halesworth, Sudbury and Beccles and the cathedral town of Bury St Edmunds with its historic ruins of the old Abbey. Ipswich is the county town with a population of about 137,000. Suffolk's population is c 650,000.

The county embraces historic places of interest such as Sutton Hoo, culture at Snape with the famous annual Aldeburgh music festival, is on the Heritage Coast and is a haven for lovers of natural history and birdlife. The busy port of Felixstowe is at the end of the A14 which runs via Cambridge to the Midlands and the A12 which gives access to London and the Norfolk Broads.

## Who are we?

We are often known as 'the Church of England in Suffolk'. The diocesan bishop is the Right Reverend Martin Seeley, and the suffragan bishop is the Right Reverend Dr Mike Harrison. Both work from the Bishop's House in Ipswich.

They work together closely to help us shape our vision and strategy, and amongst a plethora of other tasks offer regular teaching mornings to nurture the faith of people in our congregations – and a regular Vlog which can be found on Facebook.

There are three archdeaconries and over 450 churches where visitors will find a wide range of worshipping styles, from the traditional to contemporary, as well as Fresh Expressions and growing numbers of 'Lightwave' groups for those who haven't connected with traditional church previously.

The Cathedral of St Edmund and St James in Bury St Edmunds is the mother church of the Diocese and is proactive in offering support to clergy and parishes including welcoming parishes on pilgrimage. We also work closely with our 88 Church of England primary schools.

All this is, of course, supported by a small and committed diocesan staff based in the diocesan office in Ipswich.

## What is our vision?

Our diocesan vision is to be '*Growing in God*', aiming to grow 'flourishing congregations making a difference'. This vision was accepted by Diocesan Synod in 2014 and since then we have been focussing on four key priorities:

- Growing in Depth: responding to the call of Christ in every part of our lives.
- Growing in Number: drawing the contacts we have into the life of God's kingdom.
- Growing in Influence: reaching beyond ourselves in our impact on the wider world.
- Growing Younger; building churches whose age-range reflects our communities.

# Growing in God

Parishes are encouraged to use a simple Mission Action Planning tool to help us all to focus on these priorities and how they might be worked out in each different context. We are trusting God that this vision, underpinned by a commitment to Christian stewardship, will bear fruit as we look to the future.

As part of this vision, we have recently received Strategic Development Funding for two major projects: Inspiring Ipswich, overseen by the Archdeacon of Ipswich which aims to grow the church in Ipswich through church planting and reaching out to those who live in the town, and 'Growing God in the Countryside', overseen by the Archdeacon for Rural Mission.

This focusses on nurturing and discipling new Christians through small Lightwave groups and hubs such as the one being established at Bungay. (The Growing in God in the Countryside project plan is available among the documents at [www.lightwave.org/vacancies](http://www.lightwave.org/vacancies))

We have also been part of a pilot scheme exploring how we can use our church buildings more creatively both for those who worship regularly and for the benefit of our communities and many churches have benefitted from this.

We are broadening our vision through a growing partnership with the Diocese of Kagera in Tanzania, with fruitful visits and links being established.

## How can we fulfil our “Growing in God” vision?

We value our huge range of different ministries: we have over 100 stipendiary clergy, plus many SSM and PTO clergy as well as lay and ordained chaplains who can be found in such diverse places as schools, prisons, hospitals, hospices, the army, RAF and the police. Some clergy are ordained to serve in their local benefice through our pioneering 'auxiliary ordination pathway' which enables people's vocations to ordained ministry to be discerned within the Diocese.

All clergy work alongside lay ministers – Readers, elders, and the growing number people exercising recently introduced licensed ministries: pioneer ministers, evangelists, youth ministers and children's and family workers. Our ministry deployment principles encourage teams or clusters of lay and ordained ministers to work together so that clergy feel less isolated and ministry resources the mission of the church more effectively. We are just beginning to develop the principle of 'local ministers' in our benefices, releasing people's gifts to serve in their locality.

We are excited about these new developments which are playing an important part in our diocesan vision of Growing in God.

## So, in summary:

As our *Growing in God* vision states, we aspire to be people who know that 'God is with us, gathering us as Christ-centred communities, calling us to make Christian disciples, sending us in loving service, empowering us by the Holy Spirit'.



God's Light Shines in Suffolk

The diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich strongly encourages all incumbents to promote the growth of small missional groups and fresh expressions of Church in their benefices. 'Lightwave' has been created with a diocese-wide Bishop's Mission Order in order to support clergy and lay people to work together in mission-shaped communities, reaching out in innovative ways. The Lightwave Community meets in small groups in homes, pubs, offices, schools and other places and complements other ways of being church. The name of the community comes from the idea of lightwaves being the way in which light spreads into dark places. Lightwave is committed to shining the light of Jesus in Suffolk through acts of kindness and practical service as well as worship and witness. Each Lightwave group aims to do one activity together to bless their local community and to share faith in their locality or network. Each group receives support and training in their outreach through a growing network of coaches. Each is mainly concerned to bless people who are exploring faith for the first time, while simultaneously cooperating closely with local parish churches and others. The Lightwave Community is being developed through a Project called 'Growing in God in the Countryside', funded by the Strategic Development Fund of the Church Commissioners until 2025. While both urban and rural Christians are part of this community, there is a particular focus on helping 1500 new disciples come to faith in rural areas in the period of the funding. Many Lightwave groups are planting fresh expressions of Church. The understanding is that such fresh expressions of Church will be new or different ways of being established primarily for the benefit of people who are not yet members of any church. The Lightwave Community is developing three Rural Resourcing Churches, in different parts of Rural Suffolk to create and support the development of the small missional groups in their area and to intentionally provide sufficient critical mass for particular ministries which are currently under-represented in rural churches, for example with young adults and those in lower income brackets. Every part of the Lightwave Community has a vision for the great wave of God's love, bringing light to our county.

For more details see <https://www.light-wave.org/>

# APPENDIX 1

## Parish share payments made by individual parishes in 2022

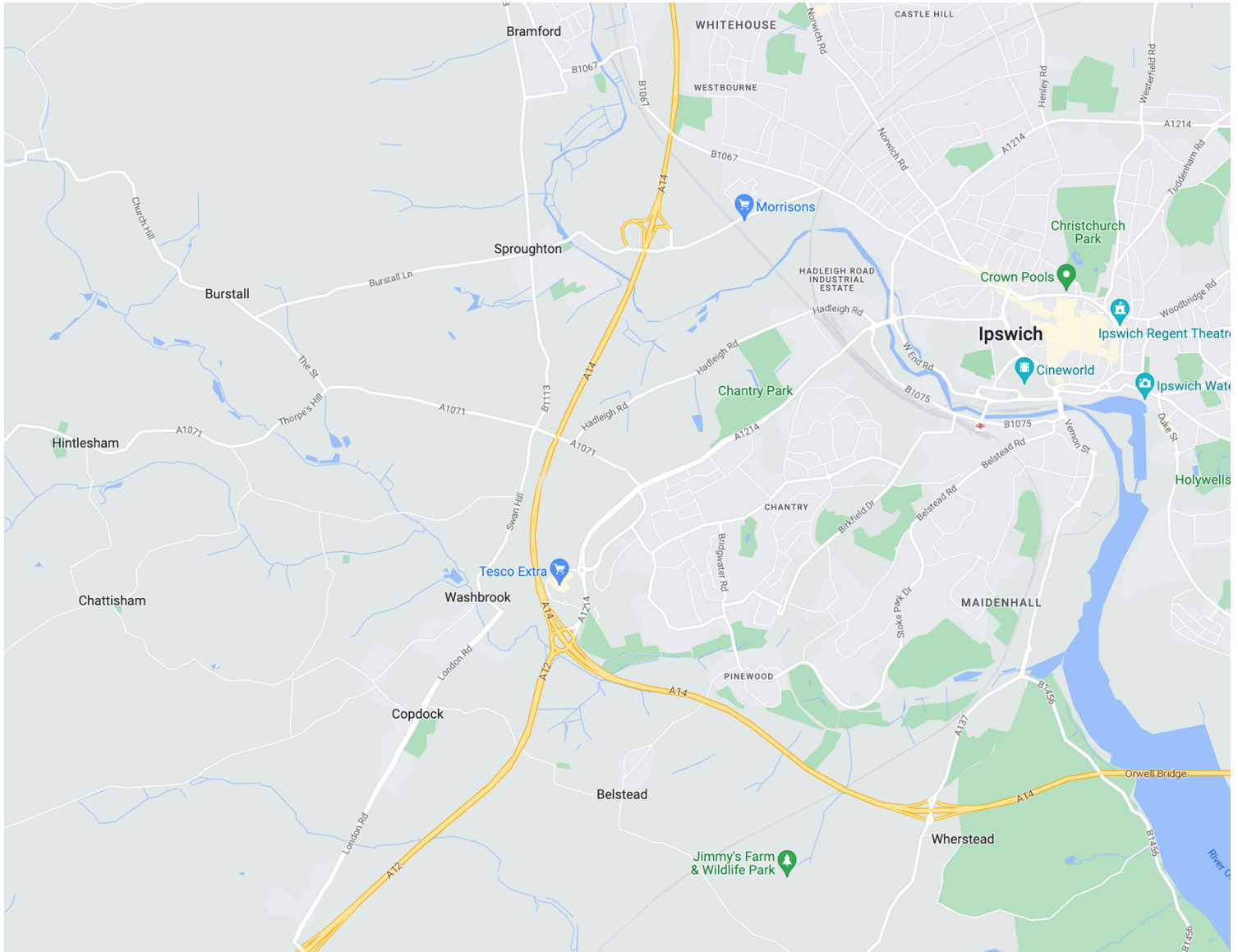
**Belstead: £2,000**

**Copdock: £17,228**

**Burstall: £8,011**

**Sproughton: £13,750**

# APPENDIX 2



London: 84 miles / 1hr 10mins by train

Constable country: 10 miles

Cambridge: 54 miles / 1hr 20mins by train

Felixstowe: 16 miles

Norwich: 44 miles / 40mins by train

Aldeburgh: 28 miles

RSPB Minsmere: 38 miles