

Statement of Need –

Installation of a post box

**The Church of St John the Evangelist,
Washingborough**



Section 1: General Information.

The church of St John the Evangelist is situated at the centre of Washingborough village and is one of three churches within the Benefice of Washingborough with Heighington and Canwick. The remaining churches are St Thomas', a Chapel of Ease in the adjacent village of Heighington and within the same Parish of Washingborough with Heighington, and All Saints' in the nearby Parish of Canwick.

From census statistics for 2001 and 2011 village populations are believed to amount to approximately 3,500 for Washingborough, 2,400 for Heighington and 350 for Canwick. Figures for the 2021 census are not yet available.

A total of 95 people were on the Church Electoral Roll for the Parish of Washingborough with Heighington in 2021. It is estimated that approximately 60% of this number normally attend services at St John's. A total of 28 people are on the Electoral Roll for the Parish of Canwick.

Since service attendance figures for 2020 (and to a great extent 2021) have been artificially low due to the Covid 19 pandemic, figures from 2019 have been quoted.

The principal weekly service is Holy Communion or Family Worship taken normally at each church each Sunday morning. Approximately 80 people typically attend these services across all three churches, with some 40 attending St John's. At St John's a further said Holy Communion service is taken on Wednesday mornings, typically attended by 12 people.

Whilst this Statement of Needs relates specifically to proposed developments at St John's Church it is important that the changes being sought be viewed as directly supporting mission and ministry ambitions across all three churches within the Benefice.

Within the Benefice the majority of baptism, marriage and funeral services take place at St John's Church which has the advantage of being able to accommodate greater numbers of people than either St Thomas' or All Saints'. The numbers of these services together with typical attendance figures are shown in the following table for 2019.

	Baptisms	Weddings	Funerals	Interment of Ashes
Number of services per year	21	13	11	5
Average number attending (adults, age older than 16 years)	53	81	73	7
Average number attending (age up to 16 yrs)	12	7	1	1

Statistics for Services at St John's Church, 2019

Whilst only a limited number of school services have been held at St John's in recent times it is expected that these will be held more frequently in future as current mission and ministry work continues to forge greater engagement with local schools. During 2019 school services and services aimed at children in church have included:

- A 'Schools Service' attended by 76 children and 12 adults.
- A 'Christingle Service' attended by 73 children and 168 adults

Plans for mission and ministry also call for the church to serve the local community in more diverse ways. Exhibitions have been held in the church, one of the most successful being the 'Glassumimass' lantern exhibition at St John's during the period from February to May 2017. This event was successful in a number of respects. Not only did it attract more than 190 visitors who would otherwise not have attended church but also brought numerous enquiries concerning the church and possibilities for interested parties to visit in future. It also marked the start of a potentially highly rewarding association with artsNK, a team of visual and performing arts specialists that initiates and supports arts projects across the North Kesteven district and beyond.

St John's is a popular venue for musical evenings including concerts presented by local choral societies and bands. Typically four such events are held each year, each of which attracts approximately 80 people.

Held in high regard is the quality of the church's eight-bell peal which is used regularly by the local group of campanologists and also by other ringing groups based elsewhere in the county.

Inside the church there is an attractive medieval setting containing numerous architectural features and artefacts which, together with the range and quality of stained-glass windows, draws several visitations each year from groups interested in cultural and ecumenical histories.

The age profile of the congregation, across all three churches, is heavily centred upon the more senior age range spanning 50 to 90+ years. There are currently no people younger than 16 years of age regularly attending church. The engagement of young families to embrace them in church life is central to plans for mission and ministry the achievement of which will be enabled in part through the proposed changes being sought at St John's.

One consequence arising from the nature of the age profile of the church's congregation is that the numbers regularly attending weekly services have declined over recent years due to ill-health or to individuals moving to live closer to younger family members. This has resulted in reductions in totals from donations. The church does, though, continue to benefit from significant collections during other

services and events and also through the consistent generosity of its primary benefactor, The Mercers.

To further boost charitable donations in a sustained manner, plans were underway to invigorate Planned Giving, but these had to be shelved during the pandemic. We are hoping to resume this work in 2022.

The financial position of the church is relatively sound, with reserves deemed commensurate with anticipated costs and contingencies for maintaining the fabric of a Gothic Period, Grade II* Listed Building. Second only to funding ministry and mission, the importance of meeting the full quota for Parish Share is an absolute commitment held by the PCC. This has been demonstrated through previous payments over the years. This year's quota is being paid via regular, monthly, instalments.

A Parish Office was established in the former vestry at St John's in Spring 2018, which included broadband internet services, a PC and a printer. A Parish Administrator was employed to work in the office paid for by a generous grant by The Mercers' Company. The Parish Administrator handled all enquires and processed all paperwork for weddings, funerals, baptisms and the erection and modification of monuments. He prepared orders of service as required and was an important point of contact for the church and has enabled the church to expand its outreach and ministry. There is no longer a paid Parish Administrator, but the Parish Office is still open every weekday, staffed by volunteers.

The opening of the Parish Office in St John's church has resulted in an increase in visitors to the church. Now that people are aware that the church is open every weekday morning we regularly get 20+ visitors a week drop in to the office for a chat, a cup of coffee and a look round the church.

The internet services became a vital part of our ministry in 2020 during the pandemic, enabling us to live-stream services to our congregation who were unable to physically attend any services. While the need for live-streaming has now largely disappeared we do still live stream occasional important services (Easter, Christmas, Remembrance Day) as required.

The most recent quinquennial inspection was undertaken in 2018, such that the next one is expected to commence in the near future. The only major finding from the 2018 inspection was the need to repair a down pipe (completed), secure a baffle panel in the belfry (completed) and undertake repairs to the clock case (ongoing).

Section 2: What is Needed.

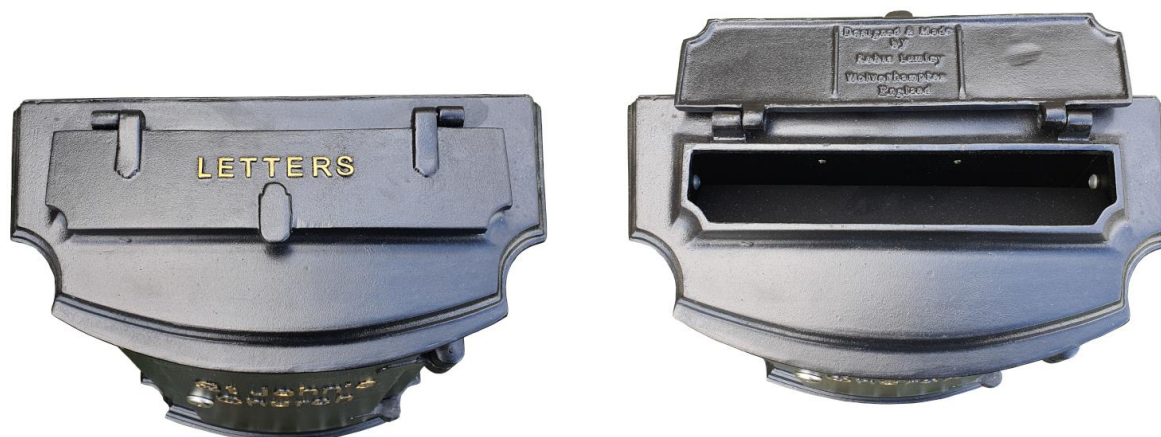
With the installation of the parish office facility there is also a need for a post box, so that mail can be reliably received.

Section 3: Proposals.

The proposal is to mount a suitable cast iron post box on the cast iron gate.



The post box is of a cast iron design and cannot be opened without the key, this ensuring that the mail is secure. It is mounted using a clamp plate shown in the right-hand photograph. The bolts are secured from within the box itself, so that the only way it would be possible to remove the post box is by opening the door with the key.



Letters are posted through the lift up flap on top of the letter box. There is an anti-tamper plate just inside the flap to prevent the mail from being removed by unauthorised persons.



The mock up photograph below shows how the post box would look when mounted on the gate.



There is no requirement for any welding or drilling of the gate metalwork. The post box attaches via a simple clamp plate. The existing fabric of the gate will not be affected in anyway.

Section 4: Justification of Proposals.

The post box is necessary to ensure that mail is reliably received by the Parish Office staff. This does not happen at present

Section 5: Justification / Impacts on the Significance of the Church.

As set out in the accompanying Statement of Significance it is anticipated that the work to mount the post box will not impact to any material extent on the significance of the church or the gate.