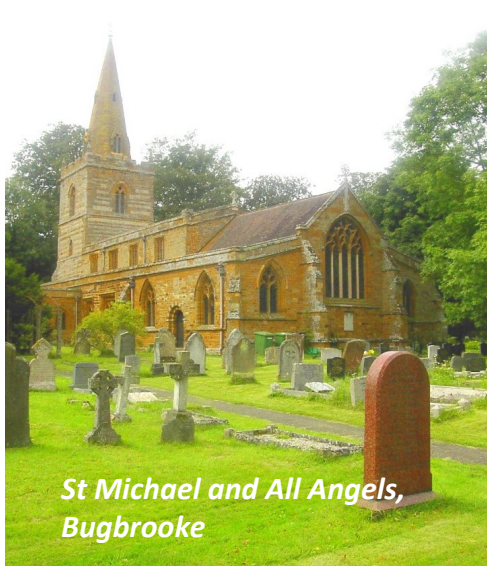


Benefice Profile 2025

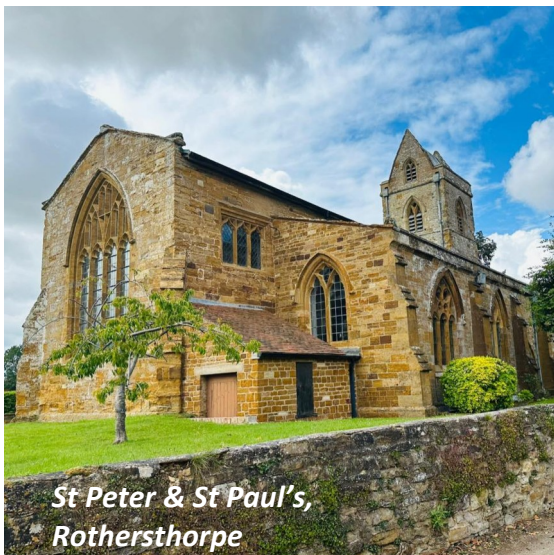
Bugbrooke with Harpole with Kislingbury with Rothersthorpe



*St Michael and All Angels,
Bugbrooke*



All Saints, Harpole



*St Peter & St Paul's,
Rothersthorpe*



St Luke's Kislingbury

Daventry Deanery Diocese of Peterborough



The Parish Churches in Bugbrooke, Harpole, Kislingbury and Rothersthorpe

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**Any photographs in this document showing children are with the permission of their parents / carers*

Welcome to the Benefice

We hope this document will give you an idea of who we are, where we are (both spiritually and geographically) and what our hopes are for the future. Please enjoy finding out a little about us and do please get in touch with any of the contacts listed in Appendix A if you have any queries.

Our Benefice in Brief

Our Benefice was created in 2006, although each Church has been the focus of Christian worship in their respective village for many hundreds of years.

We are:

- 4 parishes just west of Northampton, close to the M1 (see Appendix C)
- Individual parishes working closely with each other, supported by one central administration function (see Appendix F)
- Largely “middle of the road” in worship-style, enabling those from a range of traditions to feel at home with us, but also
- Open to embracing new ways to lead people to Christ
- Welcoming to all, regardless of age, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, gender, wealth or church tradition.
- Small but enthusiastic regular congregations, but also
- Well-supported by our wider communities at special services
- Leaders in organising community events
- Well-connected with our primary schools (3 of which are Church schools)
- Steeped in many centuries of Christian worship with beautiful listed buildings central to our village communities
- Currently approximately 6,000 combined population, although much development underway in Harpole will increase this to 15,000
- Looking forward to a future in which our churches are too small for the size of our congregations.

Our previous Rector was with us for only 2 years, being called to move with his young family when his wife was offered a career opportunity of a lifetime,. During those 2 years, however, he introduced new initiatives and ramped up our use of technology and social media. We are keen to continue to build on the legacy which he left and explore further opportunities which another “new face” will bring.

Our Mission Statement

"To be a lively, relevant, inclusive and growing Christian presence in our area".

Our Vision

- To be welcoming beacons of hope, help and spiritual guidance in the Christian life and support to the communities in facing the challenges of this unsettled world.
- To enable all, from a range of traditions, to feel that they can find a home with us
- To be welcoming to all, regardless of age, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, gender, wealth or church tradition.
- To reach out to families with young children, for whom a Sunday morning service may not be ideal, to meet their spiritual needs, initially through the "PAR-tea @ 4" services.
- To build on the learning from the 'Leading your Church into Growth' course which a group of us attended in 2023.

We look forward to a future in which our churches are too small for the size of our congregations, inspired by the LyCiG Prayer for Growth:

God of mission, who alone brings growth to your church,
send your Holy Spirit to give
vision to our planning,
wisdom to our actions,
joy to our worship,
and power to our witness.
Help our churches to grow in numbers,
in spiritual commitment to you,
and in service of our local community,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Our Future

We are looking for an inspiring Rector to broaden our Christian experience and to encourage growth in our congregations, both spiritual and in numbers. We hope that our new Rector will be:

A disciple of Christ

- a person of prayer
- committed to their own study and growth
- having a good work / life balance.

A leader

- an inspiring, scripturally-based and challenging preacher
- active with all age groups; keen to work with families and the young
- keen to encourage lay participation in all aspects of church life
- a team player as well as a leader, who works in harmony with each PCC

A pastor

- friendly and approachable, willing to listen and able to communicate
- compassionate, providing good pastoral care including visiting
- well organised and easy to contact,

Committed to outreach

- ready to work with other denominations
- visible in village life throughout the Benefice, modelling Christ in word and deed
- familiar with the use of technology and social media

Current pattern of worship:

Each Church has a service each week, with a combined service when there is a 5th Sunday in the month – see Appendix B for details.

In addition to this,

- Harpole Church hosts a Compline service on Zoom every Wednesday at 6 p.m. attracting people from the Benefice and beyond.
- Bugbrooke Church has an evening praise service on the first Sunday of the month where we link up with other Christian groups from the surrounding area.
- Additional services take place during Holy Week and at Festival times.
- Par-Tea @ 4 is a monthly service rotating around the Benefice. It is a short informal worship service open to everyone but aimed at families who may not be able to make a traditional Sunday morning service. It is followed by a party tea and a chance to socialise afterwards.



Occasional Offices

In 2024 there were (across the Benefice):

7 Baptisms, 5 Weddings, 23 Funerals, 17 Interments of Ashes, plus 3 services at the local crematorium.

Benefice-wide Initiatives

A monthly Ladies groups is held in Bugbrooke – open to all in the benefice.

Bible study groups periodically in Bugbrooke on Monday afternoons and twice monthly on Wednesday afternoons in Harpole in conjunction with the local Baptists.



Monthly “Men’s well-being walks” followed by refreshments have been introduced, based in each village in turn.

A “Rogation Sunday Walk” was introduced 3 years ago, from one parish to another, finishing with refreshments and a short thanksgiving.



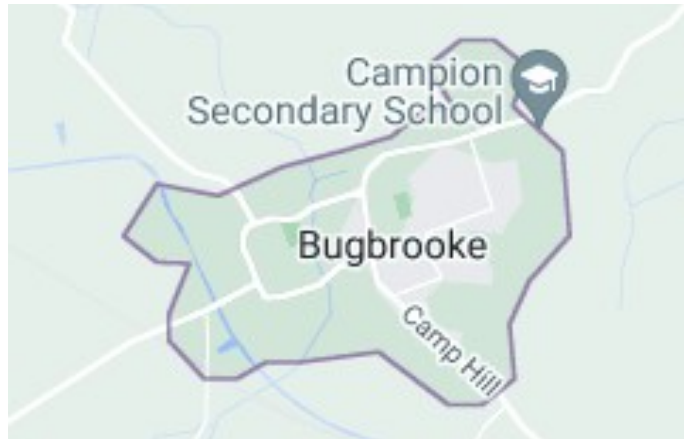
Rogation Sunday Benefice Walk 2025



Bugbrooke Parish Profile

The Parish

There are approximately 1200 households with a population of approx. 3,200. There is a broad mix of housing and new developments have been added recently. The centre of the village extending to the church is designated a conservation area. There are some small businesses within the village, a



light industrial site on the western outskirts and a large independent flour mill on the northern outskirts. Within the village there is a village store with a Post Office, a pet supplies shop, two hairdressers, a beautician, a delicatessen, a takeaway, a pharmacy which is attached to the Doctor's Surgery which serves the surrounding area, and two public houses (which have struggled to remain open since lockdown), plus a public house/restaurant on the western outskirts beside the Grand Union Canal.

A thriving Community café operates from the church rooms opposite the Rectory 4 days a week and, apart from the manager, is run by volunteers as a not-for-profit venture. On the southern edge of the village there is a Community Centre, which is home to the Parish Council office, and is surrounded by playing fields which incorporate a children's play area and outdoor keep-fit equipment.

Many different groups operate within the village, including

- uniformed groups (Scouts, Cubs, Beavers, Girl Guides, Brownies and Rainbows),
- U3A, and W.I.
- various sporting groups which operate from the Bowls club, Cricket Club, Football Club and Rugby Club.

Church Life

Our services are mainly traditional with a monthly evening contemporary worship service. Groups attached to the church include a weekly prayer meeting, a Family morning for pre-schoolers and their carers and a bi-weekly group for retired persons.



We have an established a weekly drop-in Coffee morning in the church, on a day when the Community café does not operate, providing the community with an opportunity for social involvement in the church.

We have one licensed Parish Evangelist, two Readers and a Pioneer.

We welcome all who wish to join our worship and partake in our activities. The average age of our current congregation is 60+ yrs. and we struggle to appeal to families unless there are 'special' events.

At our monthly 'informal worship' service we often link up with other Christian groups from the surrounding area. The church is also open for a limited number of hours during the week for visitors and private prayer.

There is lay involvement with the readings and intercessions at most of our services and we have teams of volunteers who provide refreshments after our services and who keep our church building clean. We also have a team of volunteers from the village who mow the grass and keep the churchyard looking tidy.

Our Readers have a long-standing practice of **providing Home Communion** for the house bound.

Our average weekly attendance for the 12 months to December 2024 was 28.

Outreach

Our popular Community Café provides a wonderful meeting place both for villagers and people from the surrounding area and, housed within this café, is a small library with a selection of fiction and non-fiction books for anyone to access – donations received going into church funds. **A thriving mid-week Family morning is also held in the church rooms** and allows parents and grandparents/carers to meet and chat over a cup of tea/coffee while the children learn to play together under the watchful eyes of their parents/carers.

A food surplus scheme was started from the Church rooms but, since the pandemic struck, this has converted to a Food Bank and supports the vulnerable families within the parish and has links with a group of Food Banks in the area.

The magazine for Bugbrooke is the *Bugbrooke LINK* which also has an on-line magazine featuring interesting information about the church building. Our previous Rector was a regular contributor.

A Ladies group (started by the previous Rector's wife) meets monthly. It is currently based on a book 'Caring for one another' (which focuses on Philemon) by Edward T Welsh - 8 lessons aimed at helping ordinary Christians create a community that cares for each other in times of trouble. The aim is to provide a nucleus for an extended pastoral group to support our community.



The Church Building and Churchyard



Our church is situated at the western end of the village, away from the majority of the housing. It is a Grade 2* stone building dating back to the 13th century in parts. Our bell tower is home to five bells and our team of bellringers are seeking new people to join the team to replace losses since the pandemic. We also have a set of handbells which would benefit from increased use.

A toilet was installed when we built the north porch extension in 1998 and we had a servery installed within the body of the church in 2018. This has provided useful space at the rear of church for a variety of activities.

The churchyard provides the village cemetery and this was recently extended. The church is floodlit and we have a roof alarm.

We are also fortunate to have a 'Friends of Bugbrooke Church' group which holds fundraising events so that they are able to assist us in the repair and maintenance of the fabric of our building. They hold various social events throughout the year which are well attended



Finances

We are committed to give 10% of our income to charitable causes as authorised by the PCC.

Our annual fête is a wonderful community event, for which we have a lot of support from the community.

Historically, Bugbrooke was allotted 45.5% of the Benefice Share (due to previous method of allocating the share). This became increasingly impractical, but in 2024, the method of calculating was reviewed and we now bear 38%, which was paid in full.

As mentioned earlier, Friends of Bugbrooke Church contribute to the maintenance of the building.

Links with School

We have nursery providers within the village as well as a thriving Pre-school which operates from the Village Hall during term time, **a large Community Primary school** with approx. 300 pupils, mainly from the village and **Campion Secondary school** which caters for approx. 1,300 pupils from the surrounding area (including the other parishes within the benefice).

Harpole Parish Profile

The Parish

The village of Harpole has evolved over a thousand years whilst retaining its pattern, centred around the 12th century church. There is a broad mix of housing, ranging from 16th century cottages to recently built houses and from owner-occupied to housing association homes. There are some 650



homes with a population of around 1,600. The village is surrounded by farmland although new warehouses are nearby. Large housing estates are under construction and planned in the vicinity. It is estimated that the number of additional dwellings in Harpole will reach 3,200 in the coming five years with population growth of 6,000 to 9,000. **All Saints' Church is keen to be ready to welcome new people into the area and into the church.** There is a thriving village shop incorporating a Post Office, as well as a public house/restaurant, a Premier Inn, a shoe shop, an antique shop and other small commercial premises.

Sports teams use the large playing field which also has a children's play area, tennis courts and a BMX circuit. There are allotments nearby. Opposite the playing field is the Bowls Club with excellent facilities for outdoor and indoor bowls as well as social amenities. There is a village hall near the church with a pre-school playgroup as well as another nursery playgroup nearby. A flourishing Youth Club with around 40 members meets every week in its own premises during term-time. Other village organisations include Guides and Brownies and a weekly Art Group. The W.I. meet regularly at the Bowls Club. The village Facebook page shows that people are keen to watch out for each other and help their neighbours and friends. As well as All Saints' Church there is a modern Methodist Chapel, and the Baptist congregation meets in the community centre.

The Combined Harpole Charitable Trust makes grants to relieve poverty and to assist education. The Rector is invited to be a trustee.



The annual Scarecrow Festival was started by the church in 1998 and draws many thousands of people from far and wide. This is now organised on a village basis but All Saints' Church still plays its part in the event.



Church Life

The congregation has built up again after the pandemic and we usually see around 22 people on Sunday mornings. Hymns are modern as well as traditional and the singing is enthusiastic.

Special services are held during Holy Week and at Harvest as well as the carol service, Christingle and crib service at Christmas.



There is a fine ring of 6 bells and a **splendid company of ringers who practise every week and train new ringers.** They ring before each morning service to welcome everyone.

There is one churchwarden and a supportive PCC. One of the Benefice Worship Leaders is based in Harpole.

We have a lay-led ecumenical Fellowship Group which meets twice each month for prayer, Bible study and discussion and this group has been the focus for two on-line Alpha courses. Compline is held on Zoom every Wednesday at 6 pm and draws people from across the Benefice and from further afield.



Outreach

The congregation is looking for growth and lay leaders have attended a 'Leading your Church into Growth' course which has encouraged innovation and outreach which we see as vital and ongoing processes. The church is physically central in the village and we intend to make it even more spiritually central and important in the life of the community.

We are acutely aware of the need to attract families and children and are keen to develop a critical mass of young people to welcome into the church so as to make it a place for all age groups. We want to be ready to welcome people who move into the new homes being built in our parish. We need an incumbent who will support and encourage this work. **The children's corner forms a welcoming focus** at the back of the church and the sound of young voices during the service is welcomed rather than discouraged. It has been wonderful to see more children coming to the PAR-tea @4 service on Sunday afternoons as it rotates around the Benefice.

Members of All Saints' Church run a **weekly coffee morning** in the local community centre. This attracts 15 – 25 people each week, many of whom are not members of the congregation, and it also gives financial support to local charities. We are also able to use this centre for other church activities. The Church fete is held in the summer, along with other social events during the year.

The Church Building and Churchyard



All Saints' Church has been on the present site since the first millennium and was sympathetically restored at the end of the 19th century. It is built of the warm coloured Northampton ironstone and is Grade 2* listed.

The building is in good general repair and is equipped with the usual facilities of radiator heating, WC, servery, disabled access and roof alarm. **A completely new audio-visual system is on order.** There is seating for 120 people.

The Quinquennial Inspection is due in 2027. The church is open every day during daylight hours and has welcoming areas for visitors, including children. Members of the village have created artwork for the church to mark particular occasions. The churchyard is open, frequently visited and well-tended by the Parish Council.



Finances

The church treasurer keeps a careful eye on income and expenditure. **We have returned to paying our parish share in full** after two difficult years during the pandemic when there was a small shortfall. The Fabric Fund stands at £30,000. We support the local centre for homeless people and also a named child in Togo. We make other charitable donations as voted by the PCC. We recently received a legacy which enabled us to purchase a new audio-visual system for the Church.

Links with School

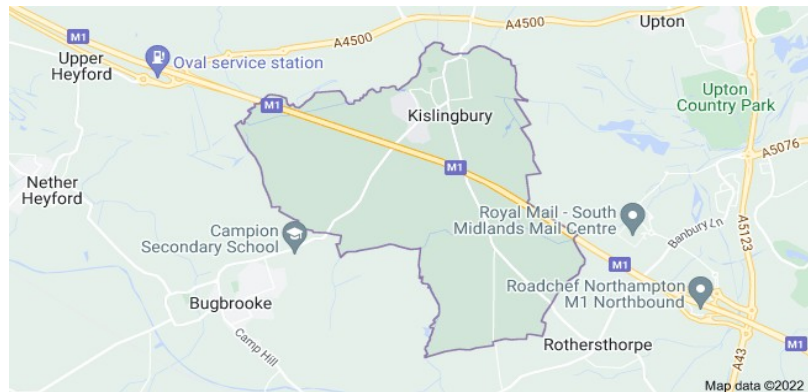
All Saints' Church has a **good relationship with Harpole Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**. The Rector will be invited to lead assemblies regularly. Children come to the church twice in their primary school career for teaching sessions when we explain the purpose and meaning of the building, ring the bells, play the organ and generally make them welcome. Christingle, crib, Easter and Harvest services are held in church and the pupils present a Nativity play before Christmas with standing room only for the congregation.

Kislingbury Parish Profile

The Parish

The village is situated adjacent to the River Nene, with a population of around 1,400. The village has as diverse range of housing with a mixture of older village homes made from Northamptonshire

stone, council housing, a complex of old people's bungalows and 1970's type housing. There are two modern housing estates with another under discussion. Near the river is the Baptist Chapel which is now linked with Upton, a suburb on the outskirts of Northampton. Sunday services are no longer held at the chapel but the chapel rooms house a small café which is also used for a weekly playgroup. There is a Post Office/General Stores, two public houses which also serve food, and a licensed restaurant. A garage complex is situated on the outskirts of the village where servicing, repairs and MOTs are carried out.



The village has an excellent community spirit with a variety of clubs, societies and charities. A well-used village hall hosts regular groups such as the Over-50s, line dancing, textiles, tango, art group, and karate, as well as providing a venue for fund-raising events, children's parties and wedding receptions. A playgroup operates at the village hall on a Tuesday morning during term time which caters for pre-school children.

There is an established **Parish Council and various village charitable organizations**. The incumbent is invited to be a committee member on the Margaret Welsh Charity, Highways Charity and the Town and Charity Estates, which only meet once a year. The Community Fundraising Charity also raises money for allocation within the village.

A Playing Field complex on the edge of the village accommodates the cricket, football and bowls clubs and well as a toddlers' playground. Adjacent to this is a large area where allotments are still tended by villagers.

An asset to the village is its link with the Upton Country Park, a nature trail which follows the River Nene from the outskirts of Northampton to the village, forming a circular walk. It was completed in 2020 and is very popular with walkers and cyclists.

Church Life

Our services are very much middle of the road in tradition. We have rotas for intercessors, readers, sidespersons and post-service refreshments. Our congregation numbers are still recovering from Covid and the majority of the regular congregation is 60+ with an average of 20 attending Sunday services. We offer refreshments after each service.

Sadly, if we do have any younger visitors to our services, they do not stay because there are no other younger members of the congregation to relate to. Even though our congregation is very willing and we are often told how welcoming our church is to visitors, we still struggle to attract younger families.



Our Prayer Group continues to take requests from the local community and farther afield. This operates, at present, via the telephone.

Messy Church - For the past 11 years, we have held Messy Church for children pre-school to 11 years, in the church, 4-5 times a year, usually Harvest, Christmas, Easter and Summer with one in February if we have the help. We provide refreshments and offer 5 different craft activities illustrating the biblical theme of the afternoon. The parents/carers are always present so it gives them a chance to chat together as well. We have an average of 20-25 children attending and the majority of the adults and children who come do not attend a church.

Messy Vintage – This monthly initiative was started by 3 members of the congregation approximately 6 years ago especially for the over 60's although the average age tends to be 70-80+. We offer afternoon tea and cake, puzzles and quizzes and a craft activity. Sadly our numbers have dwindled over the last year but at present there are 8 regular attendees. There is always a lot of laughter but it also offers an opportunity to share concerns and worries with each other.

Par-Tea @ 4 - This is a new initiative for the Benefice for pre-school children with each parish hosting the party on a rota basis every 4 months. The afternoon consists of a craft on the theme of the afternoon, a bible story with songs and prayers and then afternoon teas.

Our **Parish Safeguarding Officer** is kept fully informed should there be any concerns.

Our **Pastoral Visiting Group** is also being gradually revived although there is still reluctance, especially in the elderly, to talk face to face. It is hoped that our Lent Group will also be re-commenced at the appropriate time.

Outreach

The church submits to the bi-monthly parish magazine Kislingbury News. The village website, Facebook page and village noticeboards are also regularly used.

We hold regular events throughout the year which are very popular. These include Pudding Party, Soup and Roll “Winter Warmers” during December and January, Afternoon Teas/cream teas during the summer, toasted tea cakes in the Autumn + Harvest and patronal festival lunches and Art Exhibitions. Over the last few years a village Open Gardens event has taken place in aid of the church’s Fabric Fund and in the past we have held flower festivals, special interest fairs, children’s fairs and other themed events in and around the church. **We always try to ensure that the church is part of village community life.**



We are still endeavouring to increase our activities with children, the elderly and the wider community. We are

however restricted by not having a separate church room and use the large open area at back of the church, adjacent to the servery, for the majority of the activities. We extend into the north and south aisles for larger events such as concerts.

Consequently, during Autumn and Winter, this puts an extra burden as regards heating and lighting. Our small workforce is ageing and our attempts to attract other volunteers tend to fall on stony ground. Because of this our ability to extend our ministry and stewardship is hindered. We have so many wonderful ideas but need help to put these into practice.

We need someone who can guide us in expanding our work in the community, both practically and spiritually and who can communicate with the younger element to show that worship is for all ages. We would love to be able to provide weekly activities but find it difficult to persuade people to commit regularly. The village is growing rapidly and we need to ensure that the church is part of that growth.

The Church Building and Churchyard

St Luke's Church was built in the 14th century and has remained virtually unaltered since. It was built from Northamptonshire stone and is thus very susceptible to the weather. A cob wall borders the main driveway.



The churchyard is mowed by a local gardening business and we receive an annual financial contribution from the Parish Council towards the cost. A small team of gardeners care for the flower beds and surrounds. The main churchyard has an extension, added approximately 20 years ago, and an area for ashes. Family graves in the main churchyard are still used for burials. The cob wall is showing its age so at present we are investigating the various options for repair. **The church is within the village conservation area** and is bordered by a variety of trees which do cause problems affecting some of the older graves and especially the cremation area.

Within the church building, there is a toilet, servery and small children's area, a modern gas heating system, a new sound system installed 2 years ago, and a large portable screen. There is easy access for the disabled via a portable ramp.

The church is flood-lit - this being sponsored by the **"Light up St Lukes"** village sponsorship scheme, and the roof is alarmed. The church clock is wound twice a week by two dedicated parishioners on a rota basis, and the clock is now maintained by two villagers with knowledge of the mechanics. **There is a team of 6-7 bellringers** who ring our five-bell ring each Sunday and for special events.



Finances

The 2018 Quinquennial Inspection highlighted the need for urgent repair and restoration work of the church tower. Work was carried out 2020/21 at a cost of £45,000, raised by using existing funds, grants and loans. In 2023, we had urgent work carried out to the drainage system which was cleared and new larger soakaways created. The latest inspection revealed no urgent problems but several issues needing attention within 12 months. We are therefore in the process of building up reserves again. However, although our finances are low we have been able to pay our full parish share for the last two years. Our Fabric Fund as at 31/12/24 amounts to £14,876 and the General Account stands at £12,086.

We support the Hope Centre in Northampton, the village food bank, The Children's Society and have recently arranged to sponsor a child through the Compassion Christian organisation. Other donations are made each year as agreed by the PCC.

Links with School

Kislingbury CofE Primary School currently has 100 pupils with many coming from outside the village.

It is an Academy school under the Peterborough Diocese Education Trust.

There is close contact between the church and the school with the children regularly using the church to hear about its history, discuss what takes place there and to do drawing projects.

It is also used for Christmas, Easter, Harvest, Remembrance and School leavers' services, before which members of our congregation provide welcoming coffee and biscuits for the parents.

The school is invited to take part in any suitable fund-raising events such as flower festivals.

The incumbent is usually invited to take worship fortnightly with other occasional additional visits for elements of RE such as big questions, but this is on an ad-hoc, as available, arrangement.

Rothersthorpe Parish Profile

The Parish

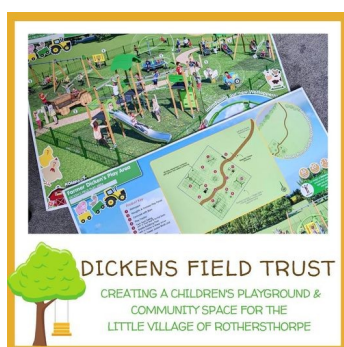
A small village to the south-west of Northampton, on the ancient Banbury Lane – one of the main driving routes from Medieval days. There are approx 200 homes in the village with a population of around 450.

The village has areas with conservation status. Housing is a mixture of old Northamptonshire ironstone properties and more modern brick-built housing. Most housing is privately owned although there are some social housing bungalows.

The village has limited facilities – no shop, pub or Post Office, but within the village there is a **relatively modern village hall** (run by a village hall management committee) which is a shared facility with the primary school. The hall is used by all sections of the community for both public and private events. Most of the village groups meet in the village hall including Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, Parish Council, WI, Table Tennis and Pilates.

There is a ‘pop-up’ pub, a weekly fish and chip van and a well-used community Facebook page. **The church hosts a café on Friday afternoons** with a regular “2.30 – 3.30” slot all year and “after-school specials” once or twice a term. Local good causes and charities are invited to host the cafe to boost their funds.

2022 finally saw the installation of a children’s play area on a piece of land donated by a local farming family in trust for 25 years. The Dickens Field Trust project raised £57,000 over 12 years to achieve this and now continues to raise funds for annual maintenance and further development.



The field is used regularly by families in the village and also has a number of wildlife elements

The Church has an excellent relationship with the Dickens Field Trust, choosing to share a couple of our major fund-raising activities with their team each year.

Church Life

The regular congregation increased to an average of 10 in 2024 and a further 2 couples have recently started to worship with us regularly. **We have good support from the wider community at special services** – such as Songs of Praise, Harvest Festival, Remembrance Sunday and the Carol service.



We occasionally hold services which are inclusive, with added social elements to invite a wider congregation. e.g. breakfast served before Mothering Sunday.

There are currently just 4 members on the PCC plus an honorary secretary.

Outreach

Rothersthorpe is flexible in responding to opportunities and the community engagement extends beyond those who are able to attend regularly. e.g. a picnic on the lawn for the King's Coronation was arranged at short notice, with great turnout.

The Church is well supported at the many fundraising and community events which we hold throughout the year. The annual events include a Plant sale, Barn Dance, Village Fair & Dog Show and Soup & Stalls. In addition, we hold Lent lunches in aid of charities and a very successful Macmillan Coffee Morning. In recent years we have introduced a Friday afternoon café in the Church. Over the school holidays we offer a 'Beach Party' and a Teddy Bears' Picnic. Other children's activities include 'Pancakes and Play' after school on Shrove Tuesday and children's activities on Easter Saturday. We support the PAR-tea @4 initiative enthusiastically – initially in the village hall – now in Church.



Information regarding church services and events is included in the monthly village newsletter which is delivered to every house in the parish and shared online with school parents. It regularly features an article from the Rector.

In 2019, we introduced a Knitted Nativity – with invitations to families with children to host Mary and Joseph (and the donkey), with tales of adventures being posted on their own facebook page. Senior members of the village host the wise men and camels and everyone meets at the Crib service on Christmas Eve.



The Church Building and Churchyard

St Peter & St Paul's is a Grade II* listed building with a closed churchyard. The earliest priest in charge dates back to 1227. There is a working five-bell ring but sadly there are insufficient bell-ringers to ring regularly although we have an occasional visiting team of ringers.



As there is no gas in the village, the heating is by means of overhead infra-red heaters. Wonderful if you are sitting directly underneath – not so if you have the misfortune to sit elsewhere. Connection of water, enabling servery and toilet facilities, was completed in 2005.

The building has been subject to much-needed maintenance over the past decade:

2016 – major project on side aisle and tower roofs and rainwater goods. Roof alarm installed

2021 – cementitious mortar on south elevation replaced with lime mortar

2022 – large area of lichen cleaned from east elevation of side aisle and chancel walls

In 2023, the PCC approved a 4 year programme of repairs **“Towards 800” comprising 4 phases, leading up to 800th anniversary celebrations in 2027**. A successful series of grant applications and fund-raising initiatives has enabled the following:



2023 – window repair (£800)

2024 – stonework and mortar repairs (£19,000)

The next phases will include

2025 – re-wiring, enabling heating improvements.
Fundraising for this phase is making good progress

2026 – internal re-ordering and decoration

Church maintenance, cleaning and gardening are all carried out regularly by volunteers from the congregation and community.

Spring and autumn working parties are well supported, tackling the areas not covered by the regular cleaning.

The churchyard at St Peter & St Paul's Church has been closed for many decades and is maintained by the Parish Council. Gravestones have been moved to the edge of the Churchyard, thereby providing a **large Church lawn** which is used for fundraising and social events. There is a small cemetery owned by the Parish Council at the top of Church Street.

Finances

Rothersthorpe PCC took a decision some years ago to hold just 6 weeks worth of Reserves at the end of the financial year. Since then, with God's grace, we have **paid our Parish Share in full**. The annual budget for the Church is c £13,000 of which £8,100 is Parish Share.

There are a number of designated and Restricted funds for Fabric, Flowers, Children's Activities, Charitable Giving and, recently, Towards 800. There is a long-standing Chancel Fund, comprising shares dating back to when Chancel Liability was bought out.

We regularly support a number of charities with dedicated fundraising, which exceeded £1,500 in 2024



Links with School

Rothersthorpe Primary School is part of Innovate Multi Academy Trust (iMAT). It has approximately 90 pupils. There are currently two Foundation Governor positions on the Governing Body one of whom is a church member, and the new incumbent will be invited to fill the other position.

The school has very well-established links with the church and will normally use the church for a service or act of worship at least once each term. Bi-annually the school holds a Spiritual Focus Week. The church has been involved in a few projects with the school over the years, recently meeting with a group of pupils to discuss the memorial service for the 80th anniversary Wellington Bomber Crash which involved the students interviewing one of the last surviving witnesses and the children attending the service to represent the school.

The school has achieved an **excellent grading in relation to the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS)**. Recently the school was awarded the Green Tree Schools Bronze Award by the Woodland Trust.



The school will actively promote the church's events (special services and fundraising) such as the Crib Service, Harvest Festival, the Propeller Café, the Village Fair & Dog Show. There is a regular group of parents and carers who bring their children to events after school and during the school holidays meaning they are well attended.

Rothersthorpe also has a privately owned day nursery which provides 55 places per session for children aged 3 months to school age. The nursery is situated opposite the church and next to the school and many of these children come from outside the village. The nursery offers an 'Out of School Club' for children up to age 11 years

The Church is the designated safe place of refuge for both the school and the nursery in the event of an emergency.

Appendices

Appendix A – Contact Information

Thank you for your interest. In the event of any queries, please contact any of the following:

Bugbrooke:	Alan Kent (PCC Lay Chair)	01604 830518
	Maureen Hale (Reader)	01604 830881 07900 001968
Harpole:	Allan Leroy (Churchwarden)	01604 830423 07967 717508
	Roger Fountain (Churchwarden)	01604 830340
Kislingbury:	Judith Tonge (PCC Secretary)	01604 830421
	Sarah Parker (PCC member)	07840 731451
Rothersthorpe:	Val Bridges (Treasurer)	07515 647309
	Hannah Gilkes (Children & Families Support / School liaison)	07725 596614

Appendix B - Current pattern of worship:

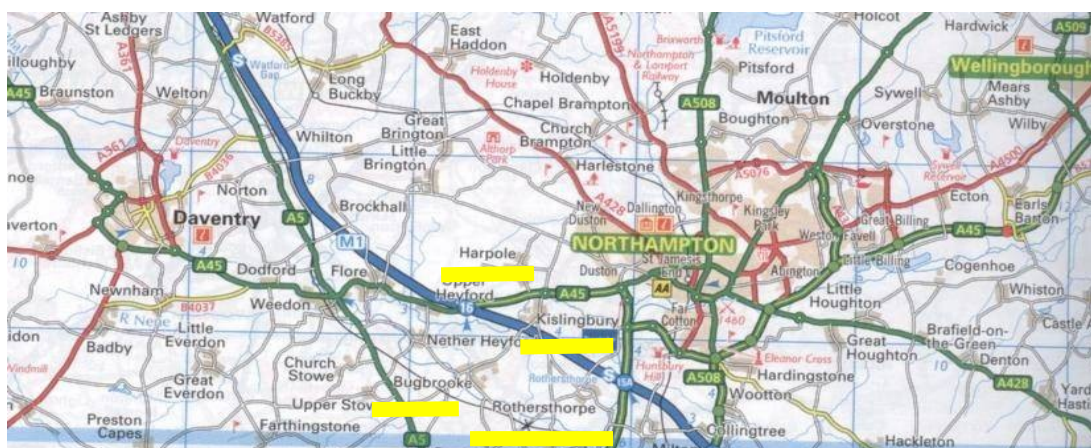
	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5
Bugbrooke 10.30	Morning Worship	Morning Worship	Holy Communion	Morning Worship	Combined Benefice Service of Communion 10.30 a.m. (location rotates around the 4 Churches)
Harpole 11.15	Morning Worship	Holy Communion	Morning Worship	Morning Worship	
Kislingbury 10.30	Holy Communion	Morning Worship	Morning Worship	Morning Worship	
Rothersthorpe 9.30	Morning Worship	Morning Worship	Morning Worship	Holy Communion	

Appendix C – Our Location

Created in 2006, we are four parishes situated in the Nene Valley to the west of Northampton between junctions 15a and 16 of the M1.

The villages each have areas of conservation and a mix of housing styles, with some older buildings being in the beautiful mellow Northamptonshire ironstone.

Formerly mainly agricultural, new warehouse construction between the M1 and A4500 is gradually changing the area. Commerce and distribution are now prominent and much new housing is under construction.



Bugbrooke is currently the largest of the 4 villages, having a population of some 3,200 including a recent housing development.

Harpole lies to the north of the A4500, with a population of 1,600. New housing estates within the parish are in progress – eventually adding 3,200 houses to the existing village.

Kislingbury is just to the south of the A4500 with a population of approximately 1,300. A development of 44 houses has recently been added with discussions underway for a possible further 90+.

Rothersthorpe is the smallest, with a population of approximately 450 and no plans for development.

Appendix D - Healthcare in the Benefice

Bugbrooke has a surgery and pharmacy. Other surgeries are located in nearby Blisworth, Duston and Weedon and Camp Hill.

Northampton has a major regional hospital, with an A&E department.

Dentists are available in Duston, Weedon and Northampton.

Appendix E - The Rectory and Church Office

The Rectory is a four-bedroom house built in the 1980s and is situated in Bugbrooke.

The Benefice Church Office is in the church rooms opposite.

Unfortunately, flooding from the local tributary of the river Nene occurred in November 2024. Total renovation is expected to be complete by the end of September 2025.



Appendix F - Administration

The administration for the Benefice is carried out by a part-time administrator who works approximately 10 hrs. each week. The running costs of this office are covered by monthly payments from each of the four churches plus 10% of the fees due to PCCs from occasional offices.

In 2024, the office took on the additional role of administration for the Rural Dean. The Deanery therefore now pays for 25% of office costs and administrator's wages.

"News for the Pews" is produced monthly in the office and a weekly email of news and prayer requests is distributed to those who have elected to be on the distribution list.

Appendix G -Social Media and Communication

We have a Benefice website administered by our Evangelist (Benefice of Bugbrooke, Harpole, Kislingbury and Rothersthorpe) and accessed as:

bugbrookechurch.co.uk

harpolechurch.co.uk

kislingburychurch.co.uk

rothersthorpechurch.co.uk.

In addition, information is shared on the village facebook groups.