

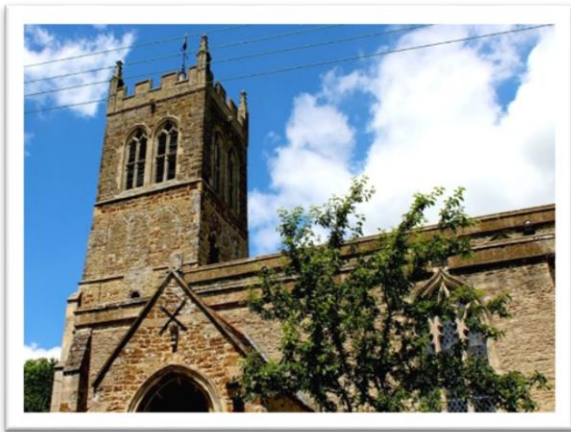
BENEFICE PROFILE



All Saints, Great Harrowden



St Peter's, Isham



All Saints, Pytchley



St Mary's, Orlingbury



St Mary the Virgin, Little Harrowden

**GREAT AND LITTLE HARROWDEN WITH
ORLINGBURY AND ISHAM
WITH PYTCHLEY
September 2025**



Benefice Profile Contents

LITTLE AND GREAT HARROWDEN WITH ORLINGBURY AND ISHAM WITH PYTCHLEY

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WELCOME FROM THE BISHOP OF PETERBOROUGH

Ministry in the Diocese of Peterborough

Warm greetings as you explore the possibility of ministry in Peterborough Diocese. Dioceses vary in their culture and their approach to ministry and mission. I hope it will help if I spell out some of our commitments, expectations and aspirations. You can find more on our website; this simply paints the picture in broad brush strokes. Roughly speaking the diocese covers Northamptonshire and Rutland as well as the City of Peterborough (which used to be in Northants, is now in Cambridgeshire for ceremonial purposes, but is a unitary authority running its own affairs).

The Archdeaconry of Northampton covers the towns of Northampton and Wellingborough, and the rural areas, market towns and villages of West Northants. The Archdeaconry of Oakham covers Peterborough, Rutland, the towns of Corby and Kettering, and the rural areas, market towns and villages of North Northants. The diocese is medium sized in population with a little under a million people, but the rural areas of Northants and Rutland include many small villages with fine, and usually modestly proportioned, medieval churches. There is one suffragan bishop, John Holbrook, Bishop of Brixworth since 2011, and two archdeacons: Richard Ormston of Northampton since 2014 and Alison Booker of Oakham since February 2022.

Bishop Donald came to the diocese in 2010 charged to reverse the serious decline in churchgoing and to instil a greater sense of diocesan identity and unity. Clergy morale is important to us. Bishops visit all licensed clergy in their homes every three years on a purely pastoral basis. We talk about “shared episcopate” and encourage rural deans, parish clergy and chaplains to be leaders in mission, confidently getting on with ministry. We are increasing the number of ordinations and of parochial clergy.

We believe in church growth. All our senior staff saw growth in their earlier parish ministries, and it is our expectation for every healthy church. Rather than a detailed diocesan strategy we are working in terms of a vision for each parish or benefice to develop and own a growth action plan. Interdependency and a shared belonging and commitment to mission are important, but each local unit should have its own aspiration to being a growing, viable, missional, serving and worshipping community.

Both bishops cover the whole diocese with distinct responsibilities rather than geographical areas.

The Bishop of Peterborough has taken responsibility for clergy in parish ministry, and for lay ministry. The Bishop of Brixworth is responsible for ordinands, curates, retired clergy, sector chaplaincies, and environmental matters.

The Archdeacon of Northampton chairs the Diocesan Board of Education. The Archdeacon of Oakham encourages and oversees mission across the diocese. These responsibilities change from time to time.

The Bishop and the Dean, Chris Dalliston, work closely together, and we present the Cathedral (even though geographically it is towards one end of a long and narrow diocese) as the spiritual centre of diocesan life. Most of our clergy come to the Renewal of Ordination Vows and the Blessing of Oils on Maundy Thursday, followed by lunch in the Bishop's Palace. Retired clergy come for a summer Eucharist and lunch. Parish clergy return in the autumn for a day of worship, teaching and fellowship. Ordinands join the senior staff for two social events at the Palace each year.

As we look for and encourage clergy to join the diocese we are committed to providing them with good and well maintained housing, a decent stipend and appropriate training and support. In turn, we look for certain commitments:

- to share with the Bishop in the cure of souls, and to work strategically for growth in numbers among the worshipping community
- to teach Christian discipleship including the principles of giving
- to take seriously the pastoral and missional opportunities of occasional offices, aiming for good working relationships with funeral directors and others
- to enable the full participation of children and young people in the whole life of the church, and to develop mission among the younger generations
- to be involved in both church and other local schools as far as possible, actively seeking opportunities for mission and preferably offering a chaplaincy role and leading collective worship rather than chairing the governing body
- to be involved in deanery and diocesan activities and in the life of their local community
- to promote and enable lay ministry in both church and community
- to take part in our ministry review process, consisting of a three-year rolling programme: a pastoral visit by me to your home, a formal review by a member of my senior team, and a review of training needs
- to engage with the continuing ministerial development programme offered by the diocese and in personal study, nurturing your own spirituality
- to hold a current DBS certificate, to undergo safeguarding training as required by the bishop, and to follow and promote the diocesan safeguarding policy.

We look forward to meeting and welcoming those who share our values and want to serve the Lord, the Church and the Gospel with us.



Bishop of Peterborough



Welcome to our Benefice!

Welcome! We're glad to have the opportunity to tell you all about our Churches and communities and hope you will want to learn more about what we can offer.



Benefice Mission Statement

The five Churches in the Benefice have agreed the following vision to inspire and guide us into the future.

We aim to:

- Be a warm, friendly, welcoming and inclusive Benefice of Churches for all individuals, all with a common purpose: growing our spiritual lives to walk together in the Light of Jesus;
- Be faithful in worship as a church family and aspire to be more dynamic, innovative and open to new ideas within our churches and communities, without losing our traditional values;
- Make Safeguarding our priority in creating a safe environment for children, young people, vulnerable adults and all those in need of protection and support, by discussion, training and active recognition of need;
- Grow and develop through fellowship, training, teaching and the nurturing of pastoral care, making the best use of all the gifts and resources God has given us all;

- Bring Christ's reconciliation, blessings and message in word and deed to every part of our existing and growing communities by the witness of our daily lives and the warmth of our support for others, especially those that are suffering, lonely or lost.

Growth Action Plans

Each Church has its own Growth Action Plan, presented with its individual Profile.



What our ideal new Rector will look like

- A spiritual leader, committed to the teaching of Jesus and able to inspire our Church and community through bible-based teaching, prayer and example and to encourage all ages with pioneering ideas in worship and pastoral work.
- Have the organisational skills to manage and nurture a cohesive Benefice, whilst recognising the individuality of all five parishes and to deliver traditional and more modern forms of worship alongside each other to meet the needs across the age range and social mix of our rural, living and working community.
- Will have a clear knowledge and understanding of the issues faced by the Church of England currently, particularly with regard to safeguarding and hierarchical differences and be prepared to discuss and plan for the protection and support of our Benefice Community in the context of poor leadership at national level.
- Have acquired the experience and energy to build, strengthen and galvanise all (each) parish teams to work on weaknesses, develop strengths and plan for growth and outreach into our diverse communities, making the Church the hub of the community in each parish.

- Be willing to work in partnership with and maximise the talents, Christ-like gifts and resources of the lay team and volunteers to assist in growth, worship and pastoral work.
- Have discretion with an appreciation of the confidentiality and sensitivity required to relate to individuals and gain trust, together with the empathy, compassion and care to provide pastoral care across the community
- Feel a passion for encouraging children and young people to develop and explore faith and be supportive of our three village schools, being a positive and recognised Christian force within them.
- Have the financial skills and knowledge to provide leadership in encouraging stewardship in the Churches and communities.
- Demonstrates sound experience in the use of technology and social media to deliver services and manage the day-to-day activities across 5 individual parishes alongside the Benefice Administrator and hold good personal communication skills.
- Able to engage with regular worshippers and also non-Churchgoers, making our Churches a welcoming space for everyone. Shows a good sense of humour – we laugh a lot!



What we can offer you

- We are a cohesive Benefice, used to working together and offer you a warm welcome from our Church congregations and communities
- Willingness to embrace new ideas and desire to strengthen our faith and learn
- A dedicated, enthusiastic and willing team of Lay Leaders, Churchwardens and PCC members ready to support and work with you

- Five different and beautiful Churches, with no major maintenance problems
- Attractive, rural surroundings with five active villages, surrounded by farmland , but close to good schools, retail centres and country parks including lakes for sailing and fishing
- Modern house with garden and countryside views



Introducing our Benefice

A rural area

Our Benefice of five Churches sits between the Northamptonshire towns of Wellingborough and Kettering, in the Wellingborough Deanery.

The Benefice was first created in the 1960's with the three Churches of All Saints' Great Harrowden, St Mary's Little Harrowden and St Mary's Orthingbury. In 2005, two more Churches, All Saints' Pytchley and St Peter's Isham joined the Benefice under one Rector. The Vicarage is situated in Little Harrowden.

This is a rural area and the villages are mostly surrounded by working farms , although Great Harrowden encompasses an area of housing on the edge of Wellingborough. There are a few small companies, but no major employers. A number of people work wholly or partly from home. There is only one shop and the villages share 3 pubs and a coffee shop between them!

There are health surgeries and Dentists in Burton Latimer and Mawsley and in the nearby towns of Wellingborough and Kettering, with an out of hours service and Hospital with an Accident and Emergency service in Kettering.

Isham and Pytchley primary schools are part of the Peterborough Diocese Educational Trust (PDET) and have strong links with their Churches. Little Harrowden also has a primary school with strong links to the Church. The Rector regularly takes assembly in all three schools, which all have the option to feed into Bishop Stopford C of E secondary academy in Kettering.

We have Forest Church based in Pytchley and the Youth Group at Little Harrowden which meet monthly. Little Harrowden also has a monthly Sunday Breakfast service which is aimed at families, who due to family and sporting commitments, would like an earlier service. Orlingbury has a monthly Café Church attended by families. We hope to re-start Little Lights, a group for pre-school babies and children and their parents/carers, based at Little Harrowden very shortly.

Working and worshipping together

Much work has been done in the past to bring the parishes together into a Benefice that works well and provides mutual support. All the parishes are committed to making the Benefice work and appreciate the benefits of worshipping together, sharing services and activities with other congregations. Our monthly service pattern has been designed to give some choice over the types of worship and by using our lay teams, all five Churches have a monthly Holy Communion service, and some have a monthly lay led service too. We also have a weekly said Holy Communion service on a Wednesday in Little Harrowden. We hold a Benefice service of Words and Music every 5th Sunday at All Saint's, Great Harrowden.

We have a monthly online Faith Explorers Group open to all and we have online study groups during Lent. The Benefice runs Marriage Preparation and Confirmation courses. Our Morning Worship Group meet 5-6 times a week online and includes intercessions for the whole Benefice.

Getting together

We have a Benefice Mothers' Union which meets regularly, and Men's and Women's Breakfast groups meet monthly – lots of discussion as well as food! Within the Benefice there are coffee mornings, lunches, history, knit and natter, exercise, art, ladies', men's, uniformed, drama and children's groups – more details in the Parish Profiles.

We also support each other in some Benefice activities and fund raising.



Contact and Communications

- Administration: we share a part time administrator, who works 5 hours per week and is based at the Vicarage and assists the Rector with Benefice administration, arranging services and completing returns. There is a Benefice photocopier based at the Vicarage.
- The churchwardens of the five parishes meet 5-6 times per year to discuss the administration of the Benefice and to share ideas and issues. We find these meeting invaluable in creating and sustaining our Benefice community culture. We have Benefice joint PCC meetings quarterly which start with the Rector's and Safeguarding reports and then break into individual parish PCC meetings.
- The Benefice has shared policies on Safeguarding, Baptism and Health and Safety. Briefings about Safeguarding are given before any major event involving children and young people. All volunteers at events are DBS checked and have completed the required Safeguarding training for their roles.
- We have a Benefice website at www.5churches.co.uk which links the five churches providing shared information about the parishes and a Benefice Facebook page.
- We have a Benefice monthly magazine called Connect 5, which is distributed free to all households in the five parishes and funded by advertising, which gives details of all Church services and Church and community events and activities.
- We share a weekly Benefice newsletter called Church Matters which is currently distributed via email and hard copies.

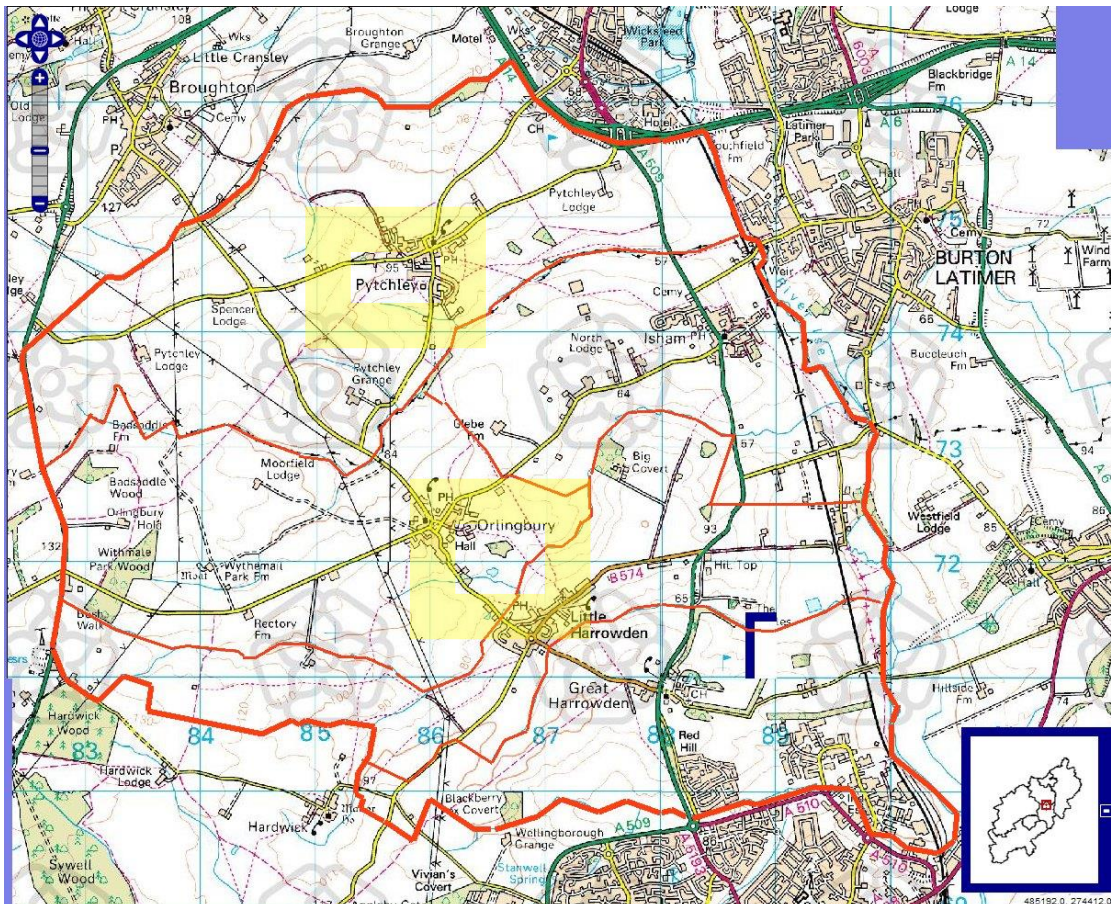
- We have some shared facilities e.g. a keyboard and projector and equipment for Children's Groups.



Benefice Good Friday Walk



Area Map



All parishes are within a 3-mile radius of each other.



Ministry in the Benefice

The new incumbent will be assisted in the Benefice by a Lay Minister and two Lay Worship Leaders.

All five parishes have experienced teams to lead and plan worship. There are monthly services which focus on families and Café Church style services which involve breakfast and discussions. The Youth Group and Forest Church are led by experienced teams of volunteers, who are DBS checked and trained, with support from Church Wardens, Lay Leaders and the Safeguarding Officer.



Church Tradition and Worship

The five Churches in the Benefice are all of 'Central' Tradition and use Common Worship Contemporary Language for Holy Communion and all other services. Eucharistic Vestments are available in all the Churches. Coloured stoles are usually worn.





The Vicarage

This is in Little Harrowden, a few minutes' walk from the Church of St Mary and the village school.



The Vicarage is a detached, brick-built house with three reception rooms, a good-sized fitted kitchen, fitted utility room and cloakroom. On the first floor there are four bedrooms, one with an en-suite bathroom and large walk-in cupboard, plus a family bathroom. It is centrally heated and has double glazed windows.

At the front there is a gravelled driveway and double garage with an electric door. The back garden is mainly laid to lawn, with magnificent views over the valley to Orlingbury.





Benefice Services

A typical month of services would look like this and all services are for the whole Benefice. We would welcome more services and are willing to give lay support.

	Time	Service	Village
First Sunday	9.30 11.00	Holy Communion Café Church (Lay led)	Pytchley Orlingbury
Second Sunday	9.30	Holy Communion	Isham
Third Sunday	9.00 9.30 11.00	Breakfast Church (Lay led) Family Service with Communion Holy Communion	Little Harrowden Great Harrowden Orlingbury
Fourth Sunday	9.30 15.00	Holy Communion Forest Church	Little Harrowden Pytchley
Fifth Sunday	Time varies	Celebration of Joy in words and music (Lay led)	Great Harrowden

Weekday Services

Wednesdays	10.00	Benefice Said Communion followed by Community Coffee	Little Harrowden
Monday-Saturday	10.00	Morning Prayer	Online
2 nd Friday	17.00	Youth Group	Little Harrowden



Benefice Special Services and Activities

SEASON	SERVICE
Lent	<p>Six week Lent course</p> <p>Lent lunches</p> <p>Lent talks at the Children's and Young People's Groups</p> <p>Ash Wednesday service</p>
Easter	<p>Palm Sunday service reading the Passion of our Lord</p> <p>Short evening Reflection services during the week</p> <p>Maundy Thursday Last Supper and washing of feet</p> <p>Good Friday Family activities</p> <p>Good Friday walk round the Benefice ending with hot cross buns and drinks</p> <p>Hour at the Cross</p> <p>Easter Eve Service of Light with Communion</p> <p>Easter Sunrise service with Communion</p> <p>Easter Communion</p>
Harvest	<p>Harvest services with collections of tins and dried good, auctions of fresh produce, faith lunches</p>
Remembrance	<p>Remembrance services take place in all Churches. Orlingbury's 10.50 am service includes the Uniformed Groups</p>
Christmas	<p>Christingle</p> <p>Crib services</p> <p>Nativity and Carol services</p> <p>Carol singing round the villages</p> <p>Christmas Eve Party service</p>

	Christmas Eve Midnight service with Communion Christmas Day service with Communion
Others	Pet service in September All Souls in November Service of Words and Music every 5 th Sunday



Preparing for a baptism at the Benefice Confirmation Service



Finances and Organisational Information

AVERAGE ATTENDANCE 2024

Great Harrowden	17
Little Harrowden	17
Orlingbury	30
Isham	31
Pytchley	22

The above figures have been taken from our Benefice Data Collection ASA returns submitted in 2024 – so the “normal” Sunday criteria applies eg a “normal” Sunday is not a baptism, Mothering Sunday, Remembrance etc.

ELECTORAL ROLLS 2025

CHURCH	NO. on ROLL	% IN VILLAGE	2021 Census POPULATION
Isham	34	88%	823
Great Harrowden	18	0%	95 Great Harrowden C900 Redhill Grange Estate
Little Harrowden	25	50%	973
Orlingbury	41	88%	454
Pytchley	16	75%	497

CHURCHWARDENS, PCCS AND CHURCH ROLES

All five Churches are well served by active Churchwardens, PCC members and Volunteers.

Duties	GH	Isham	LH	Orlingbury	Pytchley
Lay Minister		1			
Lay Worship Leader			1	1	
Churchwardens		2	2	2	2
Deputy Churchwarden				1	
PCC members	4	6	6	5	6
PCC Secretary	1	CW	CW	CW	CW
Treasurer	1	CW	1	1	1
Sacristan		CW	2	1	3
Verger	Ad hoc	CWs	2	Ad hoc	Ad hoc
Eucharistic Assts		2	2	3	3
Intercessors	3	2	4	4	4
Deanery Synod reps	1	CW	1	1	1
Choir	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Sunday School/Young Church/Children's Group or service	Family HC Service monthly		Youth Group and Breakfast Church monthly	Café Church for Families monthly	Forest Church

SAFEGUARDING

The Benefice share a Safeguarding Officer and an Administrator. Safeguarding is on the agenda of all PCC meetings and there is an update report and discussion on a safeguarding topic. Our Safeguarding is up to date, all eligible people are DBS accredited and have completed the required training for their role. Our Diocese Safeguarding Audit is up to date showing regular reviews of policies, practices, training and risk assessments.

FINANCE

The Rector consults annually with the Churchwardens and PCCs over how the 'Benefice Share' is to be divided amongst the 5 parishes. Every parish has a Treasurer and we have a Benefice Treasurer who oversees the Benefice account for shared expenses. The Benefice Share was met every year until 2018 and Clergy expenses are paid in full. Lower attendance after Covid and an ageing population has meant less giving and we all have to fund raise to meet our costs. Our recent performance has been as follows:

In 2024, we paid 40% of our total Benefice share of £74,793 to the Diocese

% Parish Share paid	2023	2024
Great Harrowden	38%	20%
Little Harrowden	40%	40%
Isham	45%	15%
Orlingbury	85%	100%
Pytchley	0%	31.5%

Full sets of Accounts for each Parish is available online through the Parish Returns.

All the Churches have a charitable giving programme.

ST PETER'S ISHAM MISSION STATEMENT

To show our love of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.
To work as partners to build our church on the foundation of Christ's teaching.

To use our God given gifts to further His ministry in Isham and beyond.

To be tolerant of others and recognise and value the different gifts we all have to share.

To be sharing and caring - loving and giving - grateful and joyful - welcoming.

PARISH OF ISHAM



The village of Isham is situated along the A509 midway between the towns of Kettering and Wellingborough and a mile from J9 of the A14. The name Isham is thought to be the oldest village name in Northamptonshire. The River Ise forms its boundary to the east with farmland to the other compass points.

Isham has a mixed-aged population of approximately 823 residents. It has a Conservation area at its heart which includes the church; this area is currently being reviewed with the possibility of being extended.



The properties vary from 17thC thatched cottages and farmhouses sitting alongside modern and social housing developments. Planning permission has been approved for a by-pass to the west of the village which it is hoped will be started over the next 2-3 years.

The village has good transport links. The X4 bus route service runs through Isham from 05:30 to 22:45 weekdays going to Peterborough and Milton Keynes via Northampton and Corby. Mainline train stations are to be found at Kettering and Wellingborough, both approximately 4 miles distance.

ISHAM CHURCH

The original church was built on the same site next to the A509 but from wood. The present church of St Peter is built of stone in the Norman and



Decorated styles and consists of a chancel with north and south aisles, a Clerestoried nave of three bays, north and south porches, and an embattled western tower containing a clock and six bells. It has an enthusiastic band of ringers who ring for most services and hold a practice night every Monday.

There are several stained-glass windows, dating between the 19thC and 21stC. The pulpit is one of the best examples of Jacobean woodwork in the county and attracts many visitors.



In December 2017 lead was stolen from the church roof on two consecutive weekends. The alarm was broken, lead sheets taken from the Nave and zinc pulled off the south aisle, causing water damage to walls and pews. Sufficient funds covered a replacement roof and a more efficient roof alarm, recognised by Ecclesiastical insurance.



The organ was originally installed in 1880 in the north aisle and moved to its present position between the choir stalls and vestry in 1973. It had a major overhaul in 2020 and is regularly tuned. St Peter's has a small choir who lead the singing at most of its services.

Many examples of the skill of the late Mr Rex Buswell, a master carpenter, wheelwright, and undertaker can be seen within the church; these include a Tower Screen built from Northamptonshire oak, and a carved literature table.

The Communion Rail Kneelers were designed and completed in 1959 by Mrs Peggy Scopes, a church member; these include approximately a quarter of a



million stitches and depict the Creation, the Flight into Egypt, and the Symbols of the Eucharist. Mrs Scopes also made several altar frontals; and sets of vestments which can still be worn at services by clergy if they wish to do so.

We have a closed churchyard, maintained by North Northants Council. A Garden of Remembrance is situated within the churchyard, available for the Interment of Ashes of Isham residents and those with connections to the village. This garden is maintained by volunteers. There is a cemetery on the outskirts of the village maintained by Isham Parish Council.



A wildlife area to the south side of the churchyard, and a Bug Hotel in the grounds, are looked after by the Scouts.

Since 1987 St Peter's has been floodlit at night. Originally paid for by Wellingborough Council, the costs have now been passed to the church. The Parish Council kindly gives an annual grant.

The last Quinquennial was carried out in March 2023 and stated that, *"The PCC had worked hard ... the general condition of the church showed that care had been taken with the maintenance of the fabric ... was always well kept both inside and outside ..."*

DURING CHURCH SERVICES

St Peter's have a very willing team of volunteers who clean, arrange flowers and help maintain the church in general so those attending church services, in any format, feel welcomed.

A children's area is available offering a range of books and toys.

Refreshments are offered following all services, enabling our congregation to speak to new visitors and socialise with each other. Sadly, the church does not have a proper preparation area or toilet facilities (it does have a key to the village hall next door where these facilities can be found).

FINANCE

After a long illness, sadly our Treasurer died in January. For the past three years our annual accounts have been prepared by the Diocesan Stewardship Officer, giving vital support to the PCC in a difficult time. This will be ongoing, working alongside a Churchwarden.

Whilst the Parish Share had previously always been paid in full, over the past couple of years this has been difficult to achieve with no access to our CCLA accounts to pay fabric costs. This has now been addressed, working with the bank and CCLA. A monthly DD has now been set up with the Diocese and will start in July to pay regular amounts towards our Parish Share.

We use a ConnecTin donations device at Services, alongside a plate collection, and this gives additional giving through card donations.

The church and village have found it tough to put on fundraising events separately and recently joined forces to form the *Isham Events Committee*. This has not only helped to raise funds for the church but has brought together the village and church, organising a varied calendar of community events.

GROWTH ACTION PLAN (GAP)

The PCC are keen to address their GAP which has not been actively spoken about for a few years now. When discussed three areas from which to start from were thought could be:

Outreach: Welcome pack – relevant information packs to offer those new to the village and/or church

Outreach: Bible-based study group – 2nd Sunday, 3pm – to offer young people; based around how they see and feel their lives playing out today and how they/we relate this to Jesus and the NT and learn to love God as our second family. We are very fortunate to have a built-in screen and projector, along with a laptop to show PowerPoints and play clips. This was used a lot during children's services and would be easy to utilise again.

In-house: General tidy-up of all areas in the church and seriously look at storage.

ELECTORAL ROLL

There are 34 members on the Electoral Roll, following the removal of all members and reapplications in March of this year, and 88% of members live in the village. This a drop in members.

ISHAM VILLAGE COMMUNITY

The village has one public house, The Lilacs, purchased by a consortium of villagers after it was put up for sale by the brewery. It was modernised and fully opened in April 2019 and has a small restaurant, popular with villagers and those visiting.



A village shop has been "hit and miss" in the village for many years, however it was reopened earlier this year and sits on the A509 not far from the bus stop going north/south through the village.

An active Wesleyan Chapel, built in 1851, is situated next door to The Lilacs. Events and fundraising activities have in the past been shared with St Peter's. Some villagers attend services at both the chapel and the church.



There is a Glebe field in the village which has been newly equipped with exercise equipment, and a play area for children. It is used by the school for sports activities and their Sports Day.

ISHAM SCHOOL



There is a Church of England Primary School in the centre of the village, part of the Peterborough Diocese Education Trust.

The school has 99 children on the Roll, with a capacity for 105.

A strong connection to St Peter's has been formed, and throughout the school year the Rector would be expected to lead Collective Worship in school two or three times each term, or classes, using the church for educational visits, linked with the R.E. curriculum. An end of year service is held in church, along with services to celebrate Harvest, Christmas and Easter.

ISHAM VILLAGE HALL

The Village Hall stands next to the church. It was rebuilt and opened in November 2014 following fundraising and additional grants; the land is leased from the church for which an annual rental is paid, and the church has agreed 300 free hours to use the hall for meetings and fundraising events. The hall toilet facilities are made available during church services.



A variety of social groups and activities meet weekly or monthly in the hall.

ISHAM CRICKET CLUB, which plays in the Northamptonshire County League, is situated on the outskirts of the village on land leased from the Parish Council.



It has its own clubhouse which can be hired for functions. The field can be used by other Isham organisations free, providing no cricket matches are taking place!



ORLINGBURY



OUR VALUES AND OBJECTIVES

We reviewed and defined our Values in February 2025 so that we can monitor them:

Safe Space

- People feel safe and secure
- Able to share with confidence
- Visit Church for quiet, reflective times
- Welcoming

Community

- Church seen as part of the Community
- Church and churchyard used as a community space
- Church contributes to community life
- Outreach into the community

Spiritually focused

- Follow the Lectionary and seasons
- Space and opportunities for reflection
- Opportunities to discuss and explore faith
- Spiritual matters on every PCC agenda

Sustainable growth

- Outreach and invitations to join worship
- Encourage voluntary work with specific role
- Explore ways of encouraging visitors
- Promote churchyard as activity and visiting area

Inclusive

- Ensure no barriers to anyone wanting to come to Church
- Explore different needs and provide them
- Check language used and ease of following services
- Welcome and get to know all who come to Church

Our Growth Action Plan for 2024/5 has the following objectives, which are monitored at every PCC meeting:

• Review and define our Values	Done
• Carry out stewardship campaign – income, volunteers, services, outreach	Done
• Get all agreements and permissions in place to start work on our project for improved access	Started
• Review how we use our income and reduce costs	Started
• Promote eco project as a place to visit and hold at least one event for families in the summer	Happening
• Deliver eco project action plan	Started
• Re-new Church noticeboard and position	Happening
• Fund raise for minimum of £5K	Done
• Get contactless giving in place	Done
• Sell or re-let the field owned by the Church	Happening
• Carry out full Electoral Roll review in 2025	Done
• Survey what individuals value or suggest for our Church	Started



The people of Orlingbury on the day after the Coronation

OUR VILLAGE

Orlingbury was mentioned in the Domesday Book and for many years was a farming community and the villagers would have worked on local farms, or in service at Orlingbury Hall, which is a medium sized country house. Originally we had a school, but this closed down many years ago and is now a private house. Some of our older inhabitants attended the school. There are approximately 190 homes in Orlingbury, of which 89% are owner occupied, 4% owned by a local housing association and 7% privately rented and farm cottages.

We have a pub, the Queen's Arms which serves food and has a garden and a popular coffee shop, Wythmails, which serves light meals. There is no bus service, apart from school buses so most villagers have at least one car. The population is C450, with about 25 children of school age and under, and just over 100 villagers of retirement age and over. This provides quite a good mix, but there is a lack of suitable houses for young people and first time buyers.

Orlingbury is protected and only infill building inside the village envelope is approved, although this has meant an increase of around 30 houses in the last 20 years by a farm reducing in size and large gardens sold off for development. The village is still surrounded by farmland and outlying farms and there is still one working farm based in the centre of the village. It is an attractive place in which to live and an active village

WHAT HAPPENS IN OUR CHURCH AND COMMUNITY

The Church and Village Green form the centre of Orlingbury, with 5 roads leading off like the spokes of a wheel. It's very attractive and frequently painted by local artists. The Green is a popular stopping point for cycle clubs, a meeting place for villagers and visitors and ideal for our annual Pets' service and other events.

Our congregation has been steadily growing over the past few years. We have a Music Director and an excellent Choir which sings at all services and is 10 strong on average. Our Church has an active policy for being inclusive in services. We have an excellent bell tower with 6 bells and a keen ringing team who ring for all services and special occasions. Guest ringers also visit.

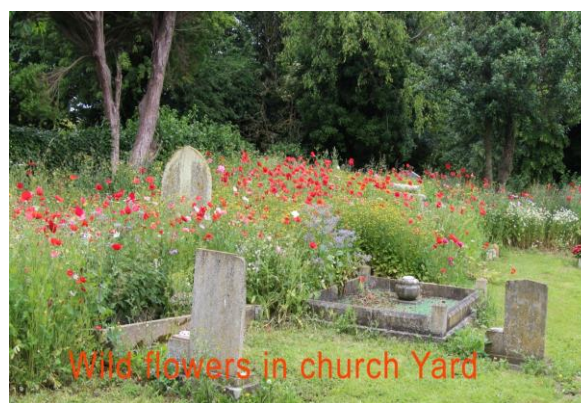


Forest Church visits Orlingbury eco projectand a Brass Band concert

Over the last fifteen years, we have developed an eco-project in the Churchyard with a volunteer team and have been given the Silver Award from Northamptonshire Wildlife Trust for two consecutive periods of 3 years. We have recorded insect and bird life, put up bird and insect houses and feeding boxes, built two bug hotels and created dead hedges for insects and small animals. Gravestones have been cleared and wild flowers planted in designated areas. We have built a pond, which is well planted, and created seating areas. Individuals adopt a grave and keep it weeded. The eco-project and mowing volunteers work together to ensure that the Churchyard is tidy and that paths are mown around the whole churchyard. We hold special events through the year such as re-furbishing the bug hotel and bird boxes and bar-b-ques. The churchyard activities are used by children's groups such as Forest Church and the Brownies.



The pond in the churchyard



Wild flowers in church Yard

There are allotments, managed by the Parish Council on a piece of land next to the churchyard, designated as a future burial ground. These are very popular and provide an element of competition amongst the growers!

Over 40 volunteers help to maintain our Church, on the PCC, flower, tea and cleaning rotas, bell ringing, singing, mowing, putting up flags, helping with services, playing the organ, delivering newsletters and volunteering on the eco-project.

We have a Charitable Giving policy and aim to give 5% of our income to charities. We deliver bi-monthly contributions to the local foodbanks and support victims fleeing domestic abuse.

The Church is also at the centre of social activities and runs events in order to fund raise and pay the parish share. These include Art Days, Christmas Market, a summer Fete, Open Gardens, Art Exhibitions and May Day and Advent Windows.



Advent windows

The village has a splendid Village Hall, which is the venue for short-mat bowls, badminton, yoga, Brownies, exercises, ballroom dancing, baby and toddlers' and pilates groups as well as the Parish Council. We have a Women's group, O3, a craft group, a Men's Group, coffee mornings and evening group and a renowned Drama Group which presents a play every year, when the Village Hall turns into a theatre. Every October, Orlingbury hosts the unofficial world conker championships (OUCH) which draws people from far and wide.

The Joseph Manning Trust, which is a Church charity and run by members of the congregation, organises a monthly lunch, and a monthly coffee morning in the Queen's Arms and an annual Brass Concert on The Green. The Trust is a valuable link between Church and Community and part funds many village groups.



Orlingbury Lunch Club team enjoying Christmas lunch after serving 70 diners!

The Queen's Arms is also a great community centre. It hosts a weekly quiz, which raises money for a local foodbank and has special events on holidays.

ST MARY'S CHURCH



The tower can be seen from miles around the village and welcomes us home.

The present building is Grade II listed and was erected in 1843 on the site of a medieval church. This provided the opportunity to add a north transept and vestry. The old church had a steeple at its west end, but the new one has an impressive tower containing a belfry at its centre, with six well-maintained bells. The churchyard still has burial spaces.

Villagers gave the tower clock to commemorate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. In 2006, villagers paid to have the clock restored and the mechanism powered by electricity.



There is a beautiful Rose window behind the altar which shows Saint Peter at the top and Mary at the bottom with the Gospel writers Matthew, Mark, Luke and John looking on. In a recess in the sanctuary there is an alabaster effigy of a knight reputed to be Jock of Badsaddle, a deserted village west of Orlingbury, who is said to have killed the last wolf (or boar) in England.

We have a small kitchen area and serve refreshments before or after services. Safety

handrails have been installed at the entrance and internally to assist members of the congregation with less mobility. Although we have fixed pews throughout the nave, we can open up the 'crossing' area for events, displays and Café Church services, which we start with breakfast. The Church is open during daylight hours and lit in certain days in Autumn and Winter.

Fabric Quinquennial Report and New Projects

We had our latest Quinquennial Inspection in February 2025 and we are expecting the report later this year. The Church is well maintained and we have regular checks internally and externally as well as external maintenance of the clock, organ and fire equipment.

We have a major project, planned to improve access across the churchyard and into the Church. The next step is for us to carry out various surveys and then submit detailed plans to the DAC.

Services

We have a well-established lay-led Café Church on the first Sunday of each month, starting with hot drinks and Danish pastries. Its an informal services with hymns and prayers and discussions, usually about the Bible reading involving everyone there, including the children. On the third Sunday, we have a Holy Communion service, enhanced by the singing of our choir. We are lucky enough to have a regular organist who also leads the choir. We hold an annual Pets' service in September on The Green.

On other Sundays, we can go to another service in the Benefice, particularly on the fifth Sunday when we have a service of words and music in celebration and worship.

At Christmas, we have a lay-led Nativity play and Carol service which is very popular and most younger village children take part. We have a family service with games on Christmas Eve in the afternoon and then we always hold the Midnight Communion service for the whole benefice.

We also have a monthly Faith Explorers Group and an annual Lent course which are held online and open to everyone.



Family service Christmas Eve afternoon

FINANCE

Our income comes from giving, fund-raising and interest on investments. We need to raise about £7K per year by fund-raising to meet our expected outgoings, including donations to charity. Our investment funds come mainly from the sale of a bungalow, left to the Church some years ago. The Charity Commissioners agreed to the sale, but we may not touch the capital sum, we can only draw on the interest. We ensure that funds are saved regularly towards the next quinquennial outcomes or an unplanned major repair.

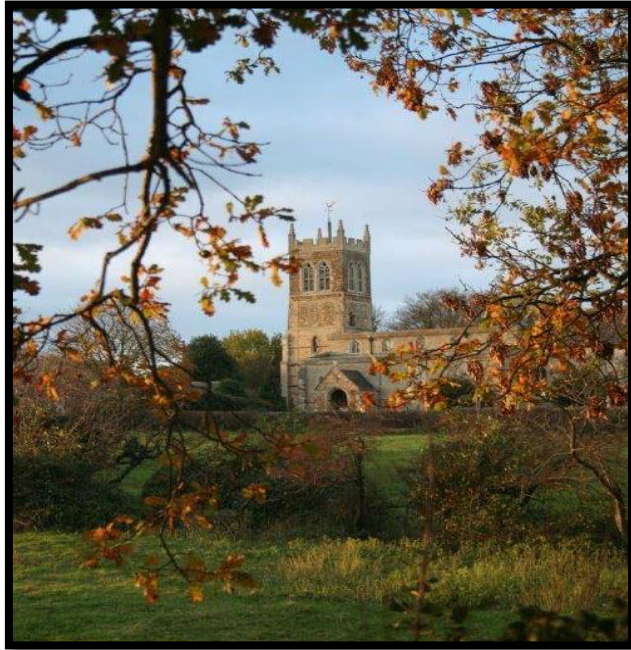
In 2024 we managed to pay 100% of our part of the Benefice Share, after a few years during and after the pandemic when we paid 70-84%.

We regularly review our Stewardship and held a campaign in 2024, when £4K was donated.

We have a card payments machine in Church.



All Saints' Pytchley



All Saints' Church, Pytchley is a grade 1 listed building, the earliest parts of which date from the 12th century, with later 13th and 14th century alterations. It was extensively restored in the 19th century.

The church is large and spacious, pews were replaced with chairs in 1973 because of beetle infestation, these can be moved around making the building flexible for different style services and also for exhibitions, concerts, fetes etc. A toilet & kitchen servery were added in 2011. The church has fabulous acoustics and has been used by musicians for recordings.

The church has 5 bells which are rung every Sunday before the service and practise takes place each Friday evening, and the bells are rung on other celebrations i.e. Coronation, VE day etc. We have a tower captain who is DBS checked.

North Northants Council maintains the churchyard, which is closed, apart from internment of cremated remains, there are two other cemeteries in the village.

Quinquennial Report and New Projects

The church is in relatively good condition. We had a Quinquennial in 2023 which resulted in tower and roof repairs, and we now have the roof and gutters maintained annually along with PAT testing and organ service.

A new roof alarm system was fitted in 2020 to comply with insurers terms.

Recently a full electrical survey has been carried out. We had our clock restored in 2020 funded from an appeal to the village for donations and a grant of £2000 for Northamptonshire All Churches Trust.

We also have an additional clock project underway, a local farming family would like to fund an extra face on the church in memory of their parents, this is currently awaiting DAC approval, the funds have already been received into our trust.

Strengths

- Welcoming and friendly
- Forest Church – good family growth
- PCHT
- BIG versatile building – no pews
- Maintenance up to date
- Good links with Village School
- Successful recent fund raising
- Strong relationships with Benefice Churches – joint PCC meetings
- Communication – Social media, Email, Website

Weaknesses and areas for growth

- Small PCC
- Small Holy Communion congregation
- Wider Pastoral Care
- **What we would expect from you.**
- Support PCC
- Organised well before a service please
- Grow Holy Communion attendance
- Be present and involved at events
- School connection
- Technologically savvy
- Have a vision for growth, whilst respecting our current traditions.
- Whole community orientated.

Pytchley Church Growth Action Plan

Church building

- Encourage use of the Church Building for other events
- Clock Face Project
- PCHT Projects
- Ongoing maintenance (broken window repair next)

Encourage a Support network & pastoral care in the Community

- Discuss Pastoral care at the PCC Meetings
- School Links
- Encourage the village community to participate in Church Activities

Participation in church activities

- Encourage church members to invite someone to go with them to major festivals
- Arty Crafty Cakey Church / Pimms & Hymns / Beetle Drive

Develop School/Church Relationship

- Promote July's Summer Festival – links with PTFA
- Church Wardens to visit school regularly
- Encourage school participation in Church festival services ie Easter, Christingle, Crib Service

PCC Tasks

- Review of Finances
- Parish Share – pay more for 2025
- Stewardship Campaign
- How to up the Holy Communion Service numbers?
- Growth of Electoral Roll



OUR VILLAGE

The village of Pytchley is mentioned in the Domesday Book, where it is recorded as being part of Peterborough Abbey.

The population is approximately 530. There are 220 houses.

There are a number of commercial organisations including farms, an excellent pub which regularly supports the Church with prizes, meetings and use of the car park, golf club, an investment company, agricultural suppliers, ancestor searching, coach company, haulage company, builders, plumbers, carpenters, plasterers, garden maintenance, dog training school, dog groomer and an outdoor Wedding Venue.

We have a playing field, cricket club and Village Hall which is an ideal venue for church social gatherings, the Knit & Natter group who meets weekly regularly contributes to the themes of Easter and Remembrance, the hall hosts many social events i.e. Race Nights, Italian Evening, Wine Tour stop, Harvest Supper, quiz nights, Girl Guides, weekly Christadelphians services, as well as the Parish Council meetings, short-mat bowls, bingo evenings, cinema evenings, Sacred Sound Journey Evening and Folk Bands. The hall is also available for private hire.

Pytchley village has a mixed demographic, consisting of working families with young children, retired people, professional people. Pytchley is a very sociable, generous caring village. The Church porch is used as a book swap shop all year round, plants, fruit and vegetables during the summer months

The church porch is always decorated with an Easter Garden and the Christmas Crib, lights & greenery and is visited by many who wouldn't normally visit the church. The church has its own Facebook page which feeds into a Village Community Facebook page, the benefice has a website, and also a Facebook page.

OUR COMMUNITY and CHURCH

Pytchley Endowed Church of England Primary School is a member of Peterborough Diocese Education Trust and was founded in 1661 as a Charity School called William Aylworth Endowed School for the children of Pytchley.

The school feeds into Bishop Stopford School and other local schools.

There are 90 pupils in school, approximately 75% of whom live outside the village. There is 1 member of the PCC who is school governor and 1 member of the PCC are a William Aylworth Trustee, the Rector is chairman of the Trust.

The school hold their Easter, Leavers Assembly, Harvest Festival, Christmas Concert and end of term services in church, where refreshments for parents and guests are served. The school are also doing a 'Summer Holiday' themed art exhibition for our July Church Festival.

The Activities Committee –

Unfortunately, after the pandemic the activities committee failed to regroup.

However, as a PCC we have continued to host regular coffee and craft morning, Arty, Crafty Cakey Church which are growing. In 2024 we held our first every Fun Dog Show and Fete and Race Night, which were both very enjoyable and did raise much needed funds, and have some plans in place for 2025.

As of February this year the PCC and Pytchley Church Heritage Trust have joined forces to organise fund raising events to bring resources together and support each other.

We have a brilliant selection of books donated by the village and dedicated book ladies who change the stock every week.

The Pytchley Church Heritage Trust



The PCHT was set up in 2007. It is a registered charity whose purpose is to raise funds for the upkeep and improvement of the church. The Trustees are drawn from the whole community

Recent successes have been financial support to the tower project, (which provided a servery and toilet) and decoration of the chancel.

They arrange concerts, lectures, historic exhibitions etc.

They are also working on a very exciting new project and have applied for a hefty grant and diocese approval.

The proposed work includes:

- Installation of a new sounds system
- New, lighter stackable chairs
- A history of the Church exhibition
- Restoring remaining box pew
- Erection of 2 wooden screens
- Development of Trust website

The first Sunday of the month is our Benefice Holy Communion Service

All welcome, all ages from across the Benefice.

These services have included an Animal Service, Mothering Sunday Service, Harvest & Remembrance, Christingle and Crib Services.

The fourth Sunday of the month is our Benefice Forest Church Service

We are extremely lucky to have a Forest Church Team – a group of very enthusiastic parents (all DBS checked, and safeguard trained) that took on the organising of this service because it is so popular. There is always a theme and a story and lots of fun, this is regularly outside the rear of the Church but could also be around the village or in the park, always outside. Hot chocolate and cakes are always a huge part too. There is always a member of the PCC on site too.



Charitable Giving

A donation from special services and the Christmas Concert are made to a charity chosen at the time.

We regularly supply donations to Kettering Food bank and have collection points in church and school.



Little Harrowden Parish Profile

Little Harrowden Growth Action Plan



Our past 5-year Growth Action Plan

What we achieved:

- We supported the Benefice Children's programme of the new Youth Group and Little Lights for toddlers
- We started the successful monthly Breakfast Church
- We held weekly Coffee Mornings

What we did not achieve:

- We were not able to pay our Parish Share in full and increase our Charitable Giving.
- We did not set up a Pastoral Care Team as an outreach

Growth Action Plan for 2025/6

- To run a **Stewardship campaign** and try to increase our **Charitable Giving**
- To set up a **Pastoral Care Team** as an outreach to include Communion to the housebound and Get-Well Cards to the sick
- To continue to support Children's Church i.e. **Breakfast Church, Youth Group and Little Lights**
- To continue to hold weekly **Coffee Mornings**
- To continue to hold the monthly **Men's Breakfast**
- To produce a **pack of local information** for new residents
- To support the work of the **Social Committee** in raising much needed funds
- To invite people to become more involved eg do a reading, help at events etc.

Five Year Growth Action Plan

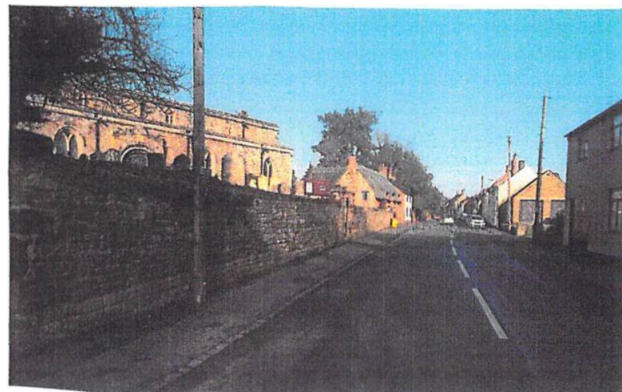
- To increase the amount we pay of our **Parish Share** by encouraging the congregation to increase their giving via the Parish Giving Scheme or direct debit and hold an annual Gift Day. To be able to increase our **Charitable Giving**

- To continue to hold Annual events that have been successful in the past **All Souls Quiet and Reflection, Remembrance Sunday Service. Christingle & Crib Service.**
- To continue our **advertising** of events and services with eye-catching posters and advertising on Social Media as well as word of mouth and direct invitations
- To continue with our **outreach** plans to promote the Church's mission as well as the vision and values of the Church. Also to nurture our faith within the Church and engaging the wider community.
- To continue to support our **Heritage Trust**
- To continue to be a warm and welcoming church

Our Village

Little Harrowden Parish is one of the longest and narrowest in Northamptonshire and is built around the Church of St Mary the Virgin, which dates back to circa 1190. The parish's population in the 2021 census was 973.

The village itself is a typical non-conformist linear village without a defined centre. Over the last twenty years all the shops have been closed, the Post Office being the most recent in 2009. The Methodist Chapel was closed in the 1980s. All of these have now been converted into living accommodation.



The population is a mix of all groups and age ranges and is now typical of many villages. Many of the young professionals, recently retired and long-term village people are not active in Church life but do take an interest in the events that we hold.

Building developments include 2 local authority estates built in the 1950s of which many are now privately owned and a large private estate "The Willows" built in the 1970s, is on the western edge of the village. There has been a lot of infilling with large expensive houses and there are also ongoing developments on brown field land with a variety of houses. On the eastern edge of the parish there are several Victorian terraced cottages originally built for railway workers. Next to these and the railway is an industrial estate of mixed occupancy known as Furnace Lane/Finedon Sidings, with around 10 units.

The local primary school has been established for approximately 350 years and changed to academy status in 2018. Currently its roll is 189 of which a high proportion comes from Wellingborough and surrounding area. They use the church only for their carol service. Ties have been lost because of changes in headteachers but we hope that these will be re-established, for example by visiting in school assemblies etc.

The Village Hall is active and has many clubs and functions on a regular basis such as keep fit, indoor bowls, the venue for the Parish Council meetings and private parties. This year they have created a weekly "warm space" day providing soup for lunch and cakes for afternoon tea.

The Working Men's Club is extremely popular and has regular entertainment with teams competing in local leagues at pool, skittles, crib and bar billiards.

Apart from businesses that are run from home and farming, there is now only one employer in the village, installing and servicing fire safety equipment.

Our Church and Community

As a church we are committed to all our congregation, those who attend regularly, those who attend intermittently and those who have yet to discover that we are here. Generally, we have an attendance of 22 per service. In a month's worship we would expect to hold one traditional Eucharist service and one Breakfast Church on a Sunday. We have a strong Lay Team. We also have a said Holy Communion on a Wednesday morning.



Youth Group at play



Servery

Our Church is warm and welcoming and is frequently used for church meetings and as such is a valuable resource especially as we have the bonus of a kitchen area in church.

We hold a Community Coffee Morning once a week, a fortnightly Knit and Natter group and along with other events supply an important point of contact for people.

Our monthly Men's Breakfast is now well established, and the monthly Youth Group numbers are growing. The fortnightly Toddler Group, Little Lights, is postponed at the moment as the leader is on maternity leave, but we hope that this will restart soon.

We have a Social Committee who organise most of the social and fund-raising activities raising approximately £6000 a year which contributes towards the Parish Share. These activities include a variety of lunches, Lent and Harvest, Afternoon Teas and refreshment for evening socials. The series of Lent lunches that we hold are in aid of different charities and are extremely popular and successful. We have also held Christmas Tree Festivals and Advent Windows and along with the Village Hall we have held joint community events.



Knit & Natter Group Poppies



Men's Breakfast Christmas Tree

St Mary's Heritage Trust

This registered Charitable Trust comprises of a committee of residents that raise funds exclusively for the fabric of our Church. Since 1997, the Church has gone through a process of major repair and renovation much of which has been funded by the Trust. This has ensured that the building is structurally sound and in good order, installing such things as modern heating, lighting, sound system and alarm system.

Church of St Mary the Virgin

The Church of St Mary's is a Grade II* listed stone building in the Traditional style, from Early English to Decorated; and consists of a chancel with south vestry, clerestoried nave of four bays, aisles and south porch.



The lower part of the gothic tower has been filled with an oak screen War Memorial which has the names of the men from the parishes of Great and Little Harrowden who were killed in the Great War. Brass plaques added to the screen have the names of those men who perished in World War II. The large, segmented fanlight above the screen is now the position of the memorial window commissioned by Meg Lawrence and dedicated in October 2010 by Bishop Donald Allister. There is a display table made for the purpose of housing a memorial book of those who contributed to this window.



Some pews have been removed which gives a large area and an ideal layout for our social events, meetings and alternative services with catering and toilet facilities. The Church can accommodate approximately 100 people seated.



Churchyard

The Main Churchyard is closed and under North Northants Council's care. The New Churchyard to the rear of the Church has a few remaining burial plots and more ashes plots. Over the last two years we've tried to make the new churchyard more wildlife friendly, building a bug hotel, putting up bird boxes and planting bulbs and flowers. There is now a seat here making it a place to sit and reflect whilst looking at the countryside views.

Quinquennial Report and New Projects

The last Quinquennial Inspection was carried out in 2018 and although we did not receive its findings until mid-2019, most of the things that were needed have been carried out.



WELCOME TO THE PARISH OF ALL SAINTS' GREAT HARROWDEN

All Saints' Church

In summary, the building dates from the 14th century and it is built of ironstone, with a tower re-built of grey ashlar in 1822.

Inside the Church, features of note are the Oak Chancel Screen which is perpendicular in style and dates from 1400 and the 14th century Doom painting above the chancel arch, which was discovered in 1896. It is one of the finest 'Dooms' in the country.



Benefice Mothering Sunday service at All Saints'

Where are we?

The parish of All Saints embraces both village and suburban settings – a small hamlet with a population of 95 combined with Redhill Grange, Wellingborough's northernmost housing estate, built in the 1970s with a population of 900+. The church sits on a crossroads on the busy A509 which connects Wellingborough with Kettering, and which slices the hamlet of Great Harrowden in half.

The village of Great Harrowden consists of a large family-run arable farm, and a mixture of old village housing and large modern homes. Harrowden Hall, a stone's throw from the church, is the home of Wellingborough Golf Club. The Hall was occupied by the recusant Vaux family in Elizabethan times, with close links to sheltered Jesuit priests, and also involvement with the Gunpowder Plot. There are no other community buildings within the parish – there is no school, shop, village hall or pub.

There is residual evidence of tunnels to the Manor House and Hall from the church, which also has a bone hole. The building of the church dates from the 14th century and is built of ironstone, with a tower rebuilt from grey Ashland in 1822. Features of note are the Oak chancel screen which is perpendicular in style and dates from 1400, and the fine 14th century Doom painting, above the chancel arch.



Young people take part in our services

Who are we?

Our new electoral roll is 18. We now have a small active core congregation who work faithfully and tirelessly together to ensure our ancient building is looked after, and worship can continue. Sadly we have no regular worshippers from within the hamlet itself.

The benefice service pattern has been designed to appeal to as wide a spread of congregation as possible. We contribute a once a month family service with Communion and usually hold the 5th Sunday Benefice Service of Words and Music.

Post Covid we have had a modest increase in attendance, including several new families. Lesley, our Lay Minister has taken us under her wing and her additional support has been beneficial and much appreciated.

We always offer a warm welcome to regular worshippers and visitors alike, which is often commented on. Refreshments are always provided after services to provide an opportunity to further cement the fellowship of our church family.

We received a legacy several years ago towards the maintenance of the fabric and improvement in facilities. This funded the installation of a loop system and audio cabinet to make worship more accessible. A purpose build servery has been another aspiration.



Sharing cake and drinks after a service

Where are we going?

Unfortunately, like many small parishes, modern-day secular life, technology, geography and the expense of maintaining a medieval building has challenged our capacity for outreach and fundraising.

Our PCC is always keen to try any initiative that could boost our numbers and our income. Over the years we have organised guest speakers, art exhibitions, choir performances, family beetle drives, an Angelfest, and continue MacMillan fundraising coffee mornings, and being a checkpoint for the annual International Waendel Walk. Our Christmas Eve Carols by Lamplight is usually a "full house".

We are the smallest parish within the five-church benefice, but members of our congregation support other parish's services and events.



Enjoying planning the Easter Egg hunt for Easter Sunday

Meanwhile, North Wellingborough has become the site of a massive new housing estate, with thousands of dwellings planned. 2020 brought to light a proposal from a church in Wellingborough to change the boundary between our parishes – which would have a massive impact on our parish. This was renegotiated into a proposal to merge our parish with the planted church fellowship of Gleneagles (north Wellingborough). Sadly after several years of their proposals being knocked back by DAC and other interested parties they withdrew from the proposed amalgamation. Subsequently our benefice has been generous with its support and fully integrated All Saints back into the 5Church family.

We continue to bear witness to Christ within our existing parish boundary, and look forward to continuing in faith and fellowship in our beautiful church building.

What we would like in the future

We are keen to support a new incumbent in getting to know this parish and its people, and will enthusiastically welcome all initiatives for growing our church family. As we demonstrated with the above section we are committed to open and honest discussion and will not shy away from any decisions that have to be made. Having had our then development plans coming to nought, our PCC members have faced very real personal or family health issues and indeed the unexpected death of one of our number. Despite that we have remained committed and quorate and determined to keep the show on the road. We hope to be refreshed with new elections later this spring and to move forwards in faith.

The future

There is no denying the decision not to proceed with the parish merger was a blow to PCC morale and tore up the development hopes we had imagined.

We have not written a new formal 5 year plan but the direction of travel is:

- To continue the development of our monthly family communion service, which has resulted in several new families joining us.
- Strengthen our lay team with the continued active involvement and mentorship of our benefice Lay Minister.
- Make every effort to recruit to our PCC.
- Increase our parish share contribution



Concert in Church with the Oriana Singers