The Parish of The Upper Wreake Annual Report for 2025

The Parish of The Upper Wreake Parish consists of the churches of :-
BROOKSBY St. Michael & All Angels; **FRISBY on the WREAKE** St.Thomas of Canterbury; **HOBY**, All Saints; **KIRBY BELLARS** St.Peter; **RAGDALE** All Saints; **ROTHERBY** All Saints.

Introduction:

This annual report has been produced in order to comply with the requirements of the Charities Act 1993, and the Church Accounts Regulations 1997. The intention is to provide a fuller picture of the life of the Church during the year than could be obtained from the accounts alone.

Objectives of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) and District Church Councils (DCC):

The PCC of the Parish meets at least four times a year to deal with any matters which concern the mission, development and administration of the Church, and is responsible for auditing decisions of the DCCs.

The DCCs function with delegated authority from the PCC in the care of the church buildings (held jointly by the local Churchwardens and the Incumbent), finance and the local mission of the Church.

Electoral Roll (as at Easter 2025)

	Brooksby	Frisby	Hoby	Kirby	Ragdale	Rotherby	Total
2025	**6**	**17**	**27**	**12**	**6**	**11**	**79**
2024	**6**	**23**	**39**	**15**	**10**	**15**	**108**

PCC Members

Chair:	The Revd David Harknett
Vice-Chair:	Canon Malcolm Britton
Secretary:	*vacant*
Treasurer:	*vacant*
Elected Members:	
Frisby-on-the- Wreake:	Pru Smith (CW), Simon Blake (CW)
Hoby:	Vic Allsop (CW), Ian Stonehouse (CW)
Kirby Bellars:	Alan McPherson (DCC link)
Ragdale:	Jane Burgess
Rotherby:	Sue Smith (CW*),* Lesley Potter (CW),
Brooksby:	Malcolm Britton (CW)
Co-opted Members:	*none*

CW = Churchwarden

1.0 Priest in Charge's Report *Rev'd David*

Look forward… Who is God calling you to be?
WHO is God calling YOU to be?

(Conclusion to Examen at the end of a day : 'Expectancy')

I heard of a very experienced therapist who was taken aback when he was ordained as an Anglican priest. Despite all his professional experience of 'transference' and group dynamics, he was quite unprepared for the sheer weight & power of projected hopes & expectations that he now experienced in his new role in the community. I am not new, having served here for 9 years now (ordained 23 years total), but I find the naming of that dynamic incredibly helpful. Hopes. Expectations. Projections.

My 9 years here divide neatly into 3 chapters as follows :-

~ 2017-2019 Arriving after severe ill health in previous parish / Finding my feet

~ 2020-2022 Rev'd Crystal curacy / Covid Lockdowns / Rev'd Neil illness (SWF)

~ 2023-2025 Minster Communities / Rev'd Neil death (SWF) / Churches Together hiatus

As I embark on another 3 year cycle, we know that Malcolm will not renew his Associate Minister license within that time, and that NE Leicestershire Minster Community will have launched. I wonder if you read all that through a lens of scarcity? Or of God's overflowing grace?

This whole Annual Report reminds me that the rural church continues to recognise & celebrate the unique opportunities & gifts present in our context. Collaboration, innovation & mission are encouraged. What God is doing in our local church & community is discovered. Plans to be a transforming presence for good are developed. Yes, rural ministry comes with its pressures & challenges. Yet possibility & gift are ever present. *"All my hope on God is founded/ he doth still my trust renew/ me through chance & change he guideth/ only good and only true".*

The increasing pressure & challenge for us is the obvious one of Officeholder vacancies. Kirby have not had a CW throughout my years here. Jane retired as CW in Ragdale last year. Malcolm stepped back in as CW at Brooksby for one year only, finishing again at this year's ADCM. Meaning that half our churches do not have even one, senior, legally appointed Warden. Which responsibility defaults to the PCC. Fear of limited resources, alongside diminishing influence & relevance, can lead to defensiveness & retreat. As the Church we become more concerned with survival than with living out our mission.

I wonder what it means to you to operate out of a sense of God's overflowing grace & provision? A shift in perspective from 'scarcity' to 'abundance', where the Church sees itself as participating in God's abundant life, with no need to fear the future. Including fear of Minster Communities, not that I see those as the be all and end all – but a means to an end. The end of not being fixated on preserving our structures but embracing creativity, generosity & openness. Trusting in God's ability to work through it. *"God's great goodness aye endureth / beauty springeth out of naught / Evermore, from his store, newborn worlds rise & adore."*

Who is God calling you to be in this new landscape? Who is God calling us to be, as church in this place? Priests are ordained to lead God's people in; *"the offering of praise & the proclamation of the gospel".* I share with the Bishop in the oversight of the Church, and look forward to; *"delighting in its beauty & rejoicing in its well-being"* here in the Upper Wreake, and nearby.

2.0 South West Framland Group Council *Canon Vic Allsop (Chair)*

Minster Communities have again featured as part of the year, not significantly as it has been others who have been looking at shaping the face of the future of ministry in this part of the Diocese. A small working group produced a document in the autumn for each Parish Church to decide if it was a document they could accept or not. We are following a familiar pattern. We were asked to vote in November which most of us did, and again, as before, no one has shared the outcome with us! Why, we should ask ourselves. I believe asking for a 'yes' or 'no' vote is divisive in itself, we should be looking for ways to work with one another rather than create entities which have no infrastructure or a sustainable model. We shouldn't be trying to create a structure after putting something in place. That is doing things back to front and will lead to failure which none of us would want. Creating division reminds me of Brexit and the wounds created from that process which are still with us. Asking for a yes or no vote, or for red, amber or green, have been bad policy decisions, particularly when the Diocese carry on regardless and don't share the outcomes of the votes, they have pressed us to make. There has been involvement in the Minster Community process from those within SWF and we thank and appreciate what they have been doing to find a model of working that everyone can be a part of. So, 2025 was a year of us carrying on as normal, what will 2026 bring? What I am sure of though is that The South West Framland Group (SWF) will continue for as long as we all want it to. Minster Community or not.

Following last year's resignation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, finally the Church of England came to a decision with the next Archbishop of Canterbury to be the current Bishop of London, Rt Revd Dame Sarah Mullally who will take up her office in early 2026. The Church of England needs a firm hand at the tiller, to rebuild the reputation of the Church of England and to reconnect with the rural church in particular.

Safeguarding is no longer a central responsibility and now in SWF each benefice has appointed their own safeguarding officer. There is an important responsibility for each PCC in SWF to support the work of the safeguarding officer, and to ensure that our churches are safe places for vulnerable people, young and old alike. We thank all those who have taken on this valued responsibility.

Despite the many issues that face the church today there are so still many hard working and dedicated members on our PCC's and DCC's and on our Group Council, and without all of you each parish church in SWF would find it impossible to continue. The challenges we face in keeping our buildings open, like needing new officers and increased running costs, make our work harder. But I still see a determination to succeed and be church in each and every community. The transformation that we have seen for Somerby Church in 2025 and more recently for Little Dalby PCC with new members, should give us all hope that the difficulties and challenges of being small rural churches in the 2020's can be overcome. The hard work of the Roof Resurrectors at Kirby Bellars should also give us hope that what some have seen as impossible can indeed happen. I for one believe they will get a new roof on their church after years of temporary covers and the ever-present possibility of church closure.

In May we were delighted when Revd Jane was licensed as Priest in Charge of the Burrough Hill Parishes Benefice at a service in Somerby, taken by Bishop Saju. The interregnum continues in the South Croxton Group, but services, for the most have been covered, by Priests, Associate Ministers and our Churchwardens. We thank all our clergy and lay leaders for their continued hard work, Revd Jane, Revd David, Revd Crystal, Revd Canon Philip, Revd Canon John, Canon Malcolm and others, some new, all who have helped maintain worship across SWF. A big thank you to everyone who has made this possible.

The office has continued to be based at Twyford in 2025, with thanks to Twyford PCC for their hospitality. The photocopier though will move to the Chapel at Hoby in January 2026, as I work for the most from home this will help considerably. However, we will continue to retain storage space at Twyford vestry and have a bit of a tidy up and dispose of some old unused papers and service sheets to reduce space taken up. We have worked to keep costs down as best as possible in 2025, which for the most has been achieved, although the introduction of NI for Admins salary has added to costs. We will need to look at spending during 2026, but for now the SWF Standing Committee have agreed that the levy for Parish Churches remains unchanged for yet another year, which is an achievement we can be pleased has been maintained.

This year we saw the loss of some long serving members of our PCC's and DCC's both past and present. I pay tribute on behalf of us all to the service and dedication of Diana Tiernan to Hoby Parish Church, Jean Morris to Hoby Parish Church, Vi Spencer to Rotherby Parish Church, Tony Geary to Ragdale Parish Church, Michael Bates to Somerby Methodist and Parish Churches, Sheila Currer to Frisby Parish Church, Davina Bates to Somerby Methodist and Parish Churches and John Billings to Frisby Parish Church. May they rest in Peace, and Rise in Glory.

The occasional offices in 2025 have seen across SWF, 41 Funerals or burials of ashes, 21 Weddings, 12 Baptisms and 21 New memorials in our church yards.

I am sure that 2026 will bring challenges for us all personally and for our parish churches and villages, as we all continue to change. May we all be supported by the love of God, which he has for each and every one of us, as we strive to be church here and in the ever-changing world around us.

O God, our light and salvation, illuminate our lives, that we may see your goodness in all those we meet and work with, in our communities, and, seeing your love for us, may we and they be changed into the likeness of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

3.0 School *Rev'd David*

In September 2025, one parent's criticism of RISE Multi Academy Trust (of which Frisby Primary is a part) hit local headlines after it was sent to the Press, our MP and the DofE. Coupled with a change.org Petition that garnered 637 signatures, Mr. Tim Webster (who was a parent here) called for the disbandment of RISE and the; *"seceding of control of its constituent schools to other Trusts".*

Mr Webster accused RISE of systemic failures in governance, accountability & leadership. Claiming that values that should underpin an educational organisation have been eroded, namely : integrity, transparency, equity and a genuine commitment to pupil welfare.

His writing touched a nerve locally so soon after Frisby Primary's 5 classes had reduced to 4 owing to budgetary demands, with two of those Classes housing +35 pupils. At its heart a cry for the needs of children to be put first, the Webster Report has had a domino effect here, with c.20 pupils leaving mid-year in the current Academic year.

You can imagine the knock-on effect on staff & pupils at Frisby Primary, as numbers on roll have declined. Complicated further by two male members of staff moving onto new things, as well as the co-leaders of the PTA.

Church-School connections have remained strong through this time, ranging from the constant of half-termly Services in St.Thomas (followed by cake & squash) through to occasional gifts & cards to enhance morale. Pru & Simon have pioneered Eco-Church activity with pupils in the churchyard (such as bulb-planting), and with the help of outside facilitator Lat Blaylock, both Key Stages contributed stunning, reflective displays to 'Art in the Church' during in September.

The school's latest Ofsted Report shows that pupils generally achieve well in this school and that pupils enjoy attending this school. Leaders ensure that children get off to a positive start in the early years, and also demonstrate a clear commitment to inclusion. Frisby CofE Primary has a Vision that reads; *"Growing with Hope… Serving with Compassion… Transforming with Humility…"* The latest SIAMS Inspection confirms that the school lives up to its foundation as a Church school, and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish.

Notable strengths include;

~ The Christian vision and values shape decision making at every level. They create a shared purpose that anchors leaders through change and challenge.

~ Collective worship is inclusive and inspires pupils and adults. It provides significant opportunities for personal spiritual growth, reflection and response.

~ Partnership with the Trust & the church supports leaders & staff to make the vision a living reality.

4.0 Rotherby House Group *Lesley Potter & Sue Smith*

Wednesday group continue to meet on Wednesdays apart from Advent and Lent, a small group but committed to each other in prayer and friendship, we have shared books and discussed our thoughts, we pray for our community, spend time in meditation and support one another in any way we can, we enjoy sharing meals together specially cake, please feel free to join us we would to see you.

5.0 Ecumenical Work **(Upper Wreake Methodist Church)** ***Janet Norburn***

5.1 Hot Potato Lunch ***(Second Thursdays)***

A group of people from the area surrounding the Upper Wreake join together for a lunch of Hot Potatoes, Salad and a simple dessert. We begin eating at 12.30pm and encourage people to come from 12.00 mid-day. There is a speaker, theme or a neighbourly discussion or chat at each session. Anyone can attend although you do have to book your Hot Potato with Dennis whose email address can be supplied on request. We are fortunate in having four volunteers to cover the washing up and clearing away. This has enabled us to continue.

5.2 Tea & Cakes ***(Third Thursdays)***

Home made cake and a cup of tea or coffee is enjoyed by a smaller group from 2.30pm to 4.30pm. People come from the surrounding area. Dogs are also welcomed provided they are on a lead. Cakes are supplied by cooks from the Church who have completed their Food and Hygiene certificates. It is led by Jenny H, Pru S, and Janet N.

5.3 Little Butterflies ***(Every Friday)***

Meeting every Friday morning from 10.30 to 12.30 during term time, in answer to a need for somewhere for children from the age or 0-4 years to go and learn to play and work together. Children must be accompanied by an adult. A small charge is made each week to help cover costs of resources and refreshments. It is led by Janet N and Emma S as well as Jane M and Jade R. You are welcome to come along and try it.

5.4 DVD Ministry ***(Wednesday Mornings)***

Set up during Covid to make worship available to all, Services are recorded respecting the law on copyright by a team of people and then edited, transferred to a DVD disc and taken out fortnightly. We visit people briefly for a chat and to deliver or collect a DVD. Initially this was completed on the door step but since the lifting of restrictions we can now go inside if people wish to talk more. Our Local Lay Pastor is also available if needed. People will pray with you, or for you, if you wish. It has helped many people who became isolated through restrictions and now through the lack of public transport in the village or through frailty & age. A regular team of 4 people do this : David P, Janet N, Jenny H and John N. All of who attend the Methodist Churches in the Upper Wreake villages.

5.5 Sacred Space ***(First Mondays)***

This activity includes readings, discussion, prayer & quiet contemplation. It is led by David P and Gill S.

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All of the activities have leaders that are safer recruited, have safeguarding training & hold DBS certificates as the Methodist Church of Great Britain requires. If you would like to join in with an activity, just come along – the only activity you need to book for is Hot Potato Lunch as we need to know how many to cook! All activities are funded by the Church locally through generous giving from both Methodist & Anglican Church congregations or Methodist Mission funding. For any enquiries, please email janathome@hotmail.com and you will be put in touch with someone. There are posters at each Methodist Church on the railings of the Frisby Methodist Centre and the noticeboard on the Hoby Methodist Centre detailing the activities & worship for the coming week.

6.0 Safeguarding *Linda Shaw (P.S.C.)*

Firstly, I would like to thank you for your support over the last year, and for your willingness to undertake all of the training that I have been forcing you to do!

As you can see by the attached report from the dashboard, our compliance percentage has increased again – there are just a few areas that need to be concentrated on, including safeguarding training for all PCC members, and discussing Worksheet 1B (attached), which we will do at a future PCC meeting.

I have attached a copy of the National Safeguarding standards, which sets out the procedures that we should all be following. This is something that can again be discussed in more detail at a future meeting.

There is to be a new Safeguarding Hub set up over the next few months, onto which I will enter all of your training details, and it will then automatically notify both of us of renewal dates. It will also list all requirements for every role in the parish, so hopefully, once the system is up and running (and I have input all of the information), it should be of great benefit.

The Diocese and Cathedral will be undergoing a safeguarding audit this year. This will be undertaken by INEQE, an independent safeguarding organisation, as part of a 4-year programme of audits across the Church of England. INEQE uses a multi-layered approach to gather information for their audits and as part of this, will be launching a series of online, confidential surveys in early June for everyone across the Diocese, Cathedral and Church settings, to take part in. The aim of these is to identify what is going well in safeguarding, as well as what needs to improve, and it is hoped that with your support, hundreds of people will complete the surveys. I am attending an audit briefing session prior to the APCM, so I will be able to provide more information about this then.

If anyone has any queries, or issues that they would like to discuss with me prior to the APCM, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

7.0 St Michael & All Angels Church, Brooksby *Malcolm Britton (Treasurer)*

General

The 70 new houses on the Spinney estate are almost all occupied now. The re-named Brooksby College is now part of the Loughborough Group of Colleges. Large scale building developments incorporating, teaching, catering and livestock facilities commenced around Hall Farm.

Mission, Worship and Events

During the year we had 11 weddings, 2 wedding blessings and 1 interment of ashes.

The freemasons held their usual service on Palm Sunday and on Good Friday a foot of the cross meditative service was held. The lambing service at Hall Farm, with a return visit by Bishop Saju, was again well supported. The Remembrance Sunday service is a regular feature. At Christmas, Spinney residents were welcomed to a much-enjoyed casual carol service and land-based courses staff and students again attended a carol service. The QHSA carol service was transferred to the kennels.

The church was open as usual for Ride and Stride in September and again we were represented at the Brooksby Hall Wedding Fairs.

Fabric and related topics

There were no building projects or repairs needed during the year. Portable appliances and the lightning conductor were also tested. The safety of the gravestones was checked, gutterings cleared out, roof slates checked and the fire extinguishers serviced.

Derek Overfield continued to mow and maintain the churchyard and Candice and Garry Barker have overseen the various bird nest boxes. The peregrine falcon nest box had not been used and was removed to St Mary's Church Melton Mowbray. Rabbit holes and mole hills in the graveyard are interesting features for our eco award but do not present a particularly tidy appearance

Fund-raising

Fund-raising included a quiz at the Hamilton Tennis Club, Melton Mowbray and Brooksby talks at Burton Lazars, Snarestone and Hinckley.

People

Thanks are due to Revd David Harknett, other clergy who have conducted weddings and John Norburn our very accommodating organist. Jane Burgess has kindly acted as verger for most of the weddings and has generously shared her fee with Brooksby Church.

Congratulations to James Fryer on his appointment as Principal of Brooksby College and we appreciate his help and advice as well as that of the Hotel Services staff. Hotel Services colleagues. A special word of thanks for Vic Allsop, our administrator and Jeanne Knowles who has retired from her active involvement with the church.

8.0 St Thomas of Canterbury, Frisby on the Wreake *Simon Blake & Pru Smith (CWs)*

Mission

We had 4 school services in 2025 and this time we broke our own record with numbers at the Harvest service : Easter 194, Leavers 164, Harvest 196 & Christmas 190.

Weddings /baptisms/funerals

There was 1 wedding this year : Richard (DCC Member and Chair of FCSG) to Trish . It was a very lovely small group of people with champagne afterwards in the church.

We didn't have any baptisms but made up for that in the number of funerals we had : 5 with 1 memorial service for Jean Carr.

Our second traditional carol service took place on 15th Dec and again was well attended with 75 people. Due to its popularity last year it was t again constructed on the 9 Lessons and Carols format . The Christingle took place as usual on Christmas Eve with 98 in attendance.

Fund raising activities

Our extremely active Frisby Church Support Group (FCSG) have excelled themselves this year by having 3 major fund raisers and 2 slightly smaller ones :

~ Table Top
~ Ratcliffe Chorale
~ Art Exhibition
~ Christmas Tree Festival
~ Traditional carol service

The amount raised from these fund raisers was in total just over £4k and meant that this year we were not running at a loss.

Gayna Johnson, on behalf of FCSG, organises an amazing cleaning group who somehow manage to clean the church just before an event such as a funeral/concert/exhibition. Richard Power (Chair of FCSG) is helping Simon with paperwork and in particular his carrying out of Quinquennial projects , undertaking repair projects , getting grants and obtaining faculties.

Coffee , Cob and Conversation (CoCoCo) for men in the Upper Wreake is still a regular feature on the 1st Saturday of each month at the Methodist Chapel in Frisby . If you're a man and you'd like to join this group please ask Simon . We have 6 regulars at the moment.

Pru continues to run and help out at the Methodists' teas once a month and Simon attends/helps at the Methodist Hot Potato sessions , also once a month, organised by Dennis Hurst.

I am very pleased to report that David's hard work brought us all together and re-established a working relationship with our Methodist friends which has resulted in our being able to have services together on Sundays once more on the 3rd Sunday of each month.

Minster Communities (MC)

Earlier in the year we (DCCs) voted on whether we could go forward to form a Minster Community which is South of Melton (but does not include Melton) and includes Thurmaston, East Goscote, Syston, Queniborough and surrounding villages. Frisby DCC overall voted amber (3 amber and 1 red vote) which means the DCC is in favour of going forward with the formation of this new MC but has a number of questions which it would like answered before the formation takes place. This vote was taken to the PCC and the results forwarded to the Diocese. Early 2026 will now see the formation the North East Minster Community which will comprise of 30 churches but only 2 licenced /paid clergy. They will be rather thinly spread even with the help of non stipendiary priests and lay readers !

Main projects/maintenance

The Old Wall in the churchyard has been estimated by Melton Borough Council to cost approx. £52k (quote Summers Inman). It's located at the west end of the church in a burial ground which has been closed for many years. The cost of this fairly large project has gone on our rates and each resident will be paying for it over the next 3 years. Work began in the summer but ceased a number of weeks before Christmas with a promise that they would return to complete the project in March.

Plans for the future

We did not have any major repair projects this year in 2025 because we're beginning to prepare for a project which we hope will solve the damp problems in our vestry/kitchen. This will involve a certain amount of digging up the path outside the north west end of the church . It is thought that the damp will certainly not be helped by the lack of ventilation in the vestry area and to that end we installed a timer on the already existing fan in Sept and this runs between 9.00a.m. and 5.00p.m. each day . However it is definitely not helped by the fact that the flooring in the vestry is well below the ground outside and there are no drains to take away the surface moisture. Thus , with the help of Jamie Mayers (our Architect)specifications/tenders are being drawn up so that we will then be able to apply for a faculty and , more importantly , for grants.

Funding Programme

We have sustained further losses of regular givers this year : 2 through death and one who has moved away . We were thus down from 39 to 35 regular givers . A funding programme has already begun and it targeted quite successfully those already giving with a good result : approx. 13 decided to increase their monthly contributions and just before Christmas we saw 2 new givers.

The plan is to target the 2 new estates in the near future but not before we have produced a brochure telling residents about church activities and also some history about the building. Once these estates have been completed we will then turn our attention to the main body of the village . The last funding programme in the main village (the 2 new estates were not then built) took place in 2016-17.

9.0 All Saints Hoby

Ian Stonehouse and Vic Allsop (Churchwardens)

It was with regret that we heard of the death of Tessa Fenner, she had been a Churchwarden of the Parish Church in the 1970's. She drew the brass template which hangs in the south aisle of the church today. We also lost at the start of the year Diana Tiernan and Tony Geary, great friends of the Parish Church. Diana over many years with the Friends of Hoby Church had raised funds for the restoration of the building. Another friend of the church and village character was Jean Morris whose memorial service took place at the Parish Church during Lent. We also lost during the year a Ragdale friend, Liz Buxton. May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

At the Parish Church Annual Meeting, Nicola Wheeler retired as Churchwarden after four years in post, she also retired from the DCC. The Church Council gave their sincere thanks to Nicola for her work in support of the Parish Church and for being a great support to her colleague Churchwarden. The meeting was also delighted to elect Ian Stonehouse as the new Churchwarden and welcomed the return of a Stonehouse to this role, c.100 years after one of his descendants held that position.

At the Upper Wreake ringers Annual Meeting Martin Paling stepped down from being Tower Captain after more than 30 years in post. He received the thanks of Hoby DCC for his dedicated service to Hoby Tower which he left in very good order. The new Tower Captain is Ian Stonehouse. Bell ringing practice nights now take place on the first and third Fridays in the month. There is now a team of ringer's resident in Hoby who can ring the church bells, something that has not been the case for many years. Later in the year the Hoby Handbells started to be used again. With thanks to Sophia Stonehouse for getting a group in place, which made several appearances in December 2025 at the History Society members evening and at the Carol Service.

Our service pattern has continued with an 8.30am service on the first Sunday of the month, Book of Common Prayer (BCP) Holy Communion service. The 4th Sunday Faith in Nature services continued during 2025, with variations for VE Day and the conservation of the Coat of Arms. We thank Revd David Harknett and Canon Malcolm Britton for their ongoing support for All Saints'. To those thanks we add Richard Perry our organist at All Saints'. Richard continued to play regularly at our 10.30am monthly gatherings.

Our relationship with the Methodist Church has continued to falter during 2025, but worship services together have been enjoyed during the year and are expected to continue in 2026.

Members of the District Church Council (DCC). In 2025 we were pleased to welcome Claire Corker as a member at the Annual Meeting. Claire joins the other DCC members of June Allsop, Canon Vic Allsop, Sue Croft, Revd David Harknett, Anne Kell, Revd Crystal McAllister, Richard Perry and Ian Stonehouse.

Four main areas occupied the time of the Parish Church in 2025. These were the conservation of the George III Coat of Arms, The sale of the Glebe Land, The purchase of a new burial ground and the preparation work for disability and ambient access to the church.

- The Geoge III Coat of Arms is a very large picture over 8ft square and has most likely hung in the church from as early as 1760. In 2025 a generous benefactor supported by the donations of two others ensured that when permissions were secured this picture almost not visible, could be fully conserved. In June 2025 the painting was brought down having been in place for almost 300 years. An amazing conservation project started in the church which saw the picture conserved, with some minor restoration work taking place. The picture was returned to its place at the end of July. The Parish Church sincerely thanks the generosity of the benefactors, as without their donations this work could not have been carried out. Flood lighting the picture remains to be completed.
- In February the Diocese advised the Parish Church of the sale of the Hoby Glebe Land estate. The Parish Church engaged in a lengthy consultation with the Diocese to secure some of that estate for the community which allocated this land to support the stipend of the Rector at the time of the enclosure in 1762. In the autumn of this year, it became apparent that no deal was going to be secured, and the Parish Church conceded. On a positive note, the land has been sold locally, and the Parish Church retains a five-year option to purchase three acres of land from the sale of the arable land.
- New burial ground. Pre application advice from Melton Borough Council (MBC) supports the plans of

the Parish Church to secure one acre of land from Leicestershire County Council (LCC) on the Frisby Road. In 2025 LCC have carried out a significant review of the rural estate which includes three farms which are part of the Hoby estate. This review is now complete and LCC and Hoby DCC should be able to start the process of a sale to the Parish Church of an acre of land for a new Burial Ground at the start of 2026

- Disabled and Ambient access to the church. This project has progressed in 2025 but not as fast as we would have wanted or liked it to. However, at the beginning of December we received planning permission from MBC, we now await approval from the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC). With permission from the DAC, we can move on to a finalised works specification and then go out to tender. We very much hope we can commence work by the autumn of 2026

Happenings in 2025

- The annual coffee morning for the Children's Society was another success, with thanks to June Allsop for organising this.
- There were two bat surveys in June 2025, the bat population is stable.
- Ride + Stride was supported again this year, but without sponsorship. We thank John Coleman for his many years of service.
- In July there was a History Society walk with teas afterwards provided by the church.
- There were several occasions when our well-used church bells were rung. They rang to celebrate the 80th anniversary of VE Day and VJ Day, as well as ringing for all the Sunday services.
- Other happenings included repair to the damaged gate and pillar to the Churchyard Extension.
- Beckett Moore's church trail for young people was introduced into church.
- Fund raising was limited in 2025 as the focus was on church projects.

Projects and maintenance work completed or on hold or requiring preparatory work during 2026

- Church heating project. A priority but unfortunately not high up the list.
- Review of our risk assessments. To be addressed in 2026
- Water ingress. Where the water gets in over the servery area has not been solved yet, nor have the issues above the nave and chancel roof. Despite work to address this issue we still have a problem. More attention here is required in 2026 using a different contractor.
- The recycling of blister packs in the large green frog in church continues to go well.
- The second bug hotel was completed in 2025.
- We have continued to support Melton Storehouse Foodbank throughout 2025. Sending donations almost every week.
- The maintenance of the Churchyard and Churchyard Extension continues to improve. Dave Lees is doing a great job
- A tree report of all trees on church land was completed in 2025
- An outdoor Christmas tree was again provided with thanks in 2025, with the prospect of a team to secure an outdoor tree in future years for the Parish Church and village.
- It is hoped to start a Church based choir in 2026.

Finance of the Parish Church.

The finances of the church will again require close attention in 2026 as the running costs of the church continue to exceed the income we receive, and this does not include finance required for repairs. At present reserves continue to cover the shortfall and we need to address the imbalance we have. It is an ongoing priority for the DCC in 2026 to increase our regular givers

Ian and Vic thank Hoby again for the support the community gives the Parish Church, as we continue the work to provide a welcome to all in our community. Ian wishes to thank everyone for the support he has received during this, his first year as Churchwarden.

10.0 St. Peter's, Kirby Bellars *Alan McPherson (DCC link)*

Electoral Roll 2026

There are 12 members on the electoral roll, a reduction of one by the death of Ann Machin.

Church Activity 2025

There have been 9 Sunday services of evening prayer with an average attendance of 8 (a reduction of two from the previous year). There has also been one holy communion service on St Peter's Day attended by 22 people.

The 6.00am sunrise service on Easter Day attracted 14 people and others were involved in building the bonfire beforehand. This is likely to become a regular feature of Easter.

A very enjoyable rogation farm walk was held at the home of Clare and Richard Ingham and the harvest thanksgiving attracted a reasonable congregation with input from Richard Ingham and his father-in-law.

A capacity crowd of 99 adults and 15 children was involved in the Christmas carol service with readings, handbells and Kirk Turner rendering solos on the flugelhorn.

The funeral of a very well known resident and local businessman, Bob Evans was held in October.

For many the reduction in the regular congregation through death and infirmity, is a concern particularly when we are applying for heritage funds. However, I think that we should regard ourselves primarily as a festival church and possibly develop the rural services; Plough Sunday, Rogation, Lammas and Harvest as well as Easter and Christmas celebrations.

Apart from services other events including arts and crafts and wildlife events might be considered. These aspects of the church's life will be much easier once the building works have been completed but until that happens, we still have to develop the life of St Peter's to provide evidence for future grant applications.

We are indebted to Alan McPherson and the Roof Resurrectors for their ideas, fund-raising and pursuing grant applications to restore the building and adding life to St Peter's and John Norburn for not only playing the organ but transporting it and a sound system from Queniborough for our major services. Martin Paling, the tower bell ringers and the handbell ringers are a huge asset to St Peter's and we are very grateful to them as well.

10.1 Kirby Roof Resurrectors *'Friends Of' equivalent*

=> see above

11.0 All Saints, Ragdale *Jane Burgess, DCC*

Mission and Ministry

Contemporary Communion Services for Inclusive Church continued to be held on the 2nd Sunday of each month during the year. The Palm Sunday service fell on the 2Nd Sunday of April and was held at Ragdale. The Harvest service was held in the church in October. Prior to this service a bumper crop of apples were discovered on a tree in the churchyard, these were picked and turned into apple crumbles for everyone to take home. As in previous years all gifts collected at the service were donated to Storehouse in Melton Mowbray.

The Carol Service was held on 19th December, and we were all delighted to welcome Derek our Christmas organist, who, as in previous years entertained us with his lively organ playing of some modern Christmas Carols, encouraging everyone to join in with percussion instruments. Although the number attending was fewer than previous years, we raised£100 which was donated to the Matt Hampson Foundation, supporting young people seriously injured through sport. Refreshments of mulled wine, sausage rolls, and mince pies followed with most people staying and enjoying the evening.

No funerals took place during the year, although the internment of Tony and Lynne Geary's ashes took place in May with many of their family and friends attending.

No wedding services were held at Ragdale during the year

At the ADCM meeting in March there were no changes to the members of the DCC. Although there are vacancies for Churchwarden, Treasurer and Secretary.

Special Events

There were no special services held during the year.

Fabric of the Church Building

There has been no substantial work done to the building. However, following an extremely wet period of weather part of the churchyard wall has recently collapsed and will require a significant amount of money to repair it. Currently an insurance claim for the damage is being assessed, if this is unsuccessful money will have to be raised and grants applied for.

The churchyard continues to be mowed and cared for by Siobhan Bowley, and we are very appreciative of this help.

Fundraising / Social Activities

We have held a few coffee mornings during the year which are becoming very well supported by neighbouring villages, it is lovely to see people coming together and enjoying coffee, cake and conversation.

12.0 All Saints, Rotherby *Sue Smith & Lesley Potter (Churchwardens)*

We are blessed in Rotherby to have six DCC members, we have their full support regarding our Church and community, and couldn't run the Church without them. Each member has their own special gifts and l would like to thank them here for all their support in all they do.

A very successful fundraising in May thanks to Serena's retirement and all the volunteers who helped in Church with refreshments, also all the beautiful jams made by Serena and Charles very popular with our champers.

The firework display and bonfire were well supported again this year with a fantastic display, thanks to everyone who helped.

In November the Wednesday group hosted a coffee morning for Pancreatic cancer in memory of Sandy, we tried to encourage our visitors to join us on a Wednesday afternoon but to no avail, despite this it was a happy time with wonderful cakes and we raised lots of money for the charity.

Christmas 2025 was a very busy time for us starting in November with the Winter Warmer a great success as always, so good to get the community together. Our Christmas services were well attended, the Carol Service as always followed with festive refreshments, always well received. Our Annual Christmas Walk on Dec 27th and the weather kept fine for us this year, followed with homemade soup and crusty bread, all gathering around the table having a great time.

Our Church numbers are down this year which seems to apply to most of our Churches, and we do wonder what the future holds for our small Parish Churches, we make sure everyone receives a warm welcome, our early morning communion held on the 3rd Sunday at 8-30 centred around a table in the meeting area is proving a very special time together, a time for sharing our thoughts and Gods Word. The first Sunday in the month a more relaxed time follows breakfast of croissants and coffee, to which all are welcome, sadly we lost Collin this year who always attended Rotherby even when he had to rely on his wife Julie and a wheelchair. Thank you to Rev David who always inspires us with his services, no two are ever the same.

Our organ is in need of repair, if we want to continue to use, we have a quote for £15,000 with Cousons and are in the process of getting more quotes, or whether we decide to get an electric organ at a much lower cost.

Lesley has worked tirelessly all year hosting the Champers we have had wonderful comments and a steady income. Many thanks to Lesley for standing her ground amidst opposition - a great success.

Our heating let us down on Christmas Eve and we warmed our selves around all the candles that Richard and Sophia had put in place, Gary has since had this repaired, many thanks Gary.

As l write this report it is nearly May and we will be almost half way through this year, time for holidays and good times ahead, we pray for Gods safe keeping and Blessing through the year.

Sue

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After all the work in March to get champing set up We went live on 5th April and are first booking was 26th May. During 2025 we had 18 bookings, who would have thought that idea would take off as it did, only because my husband and I walk in to a church in Aldwincle which was closed for worship but open for overnight sleepers

Lesley

13.0 Bellringers *Martin Paling, Tower Captain*

The local band of Tower bell ringers consists of 17 people now, many of whom have met weekly throughout the year, to continue to develop their skills and to ring for all of the Church services and for special occasions. All three of the Teenagers who joined the Team in 2024 have achieved the required level to qualify for the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.

Taylors Bellfounders conducted a maintenance check of the Belfry installation in January, which revealed various matters, including an issue regarding the condition of the woodwork on No.5 bell. This prompted a further visit from Taylors, to provide guidance on the repairs required and desirable. Works to replace the stay and wooden blocks on the slider rail of No.5 bell have been completed, making the bell less difficult to handle, but replacement of the headstock, together with other works, will become necessary in the near future, as soon as funds become available.

At the Ringers' AGM in March, Martin Paling stated his intention to step down as Tower Captain at Hoby and Kirby in 2026. After discussion, it was agreed that Ian Stonehouse would take over the role at Hoby with immediate effect and that Martin would remain in post at Kirby until the 2026 AGM. Following on from this change, it was decided to share the weekly practices at Hoby on the first and third Fridays of the month and at Kirby on the second and fourth Fridays. In months with a fifth Friday, the band goes 'on tour', to visit other churches. In 2025 we have visited Asfordby, Barkby, Seagrave and Walton on the Wolds.

The 80th Anniversary of VE Day was marked by ringing the Tower bells on 8 May and for the village's celebratory event in the V-Hall. The 80th Anniversary of VJ Day was similarly marked, ringing on 15 Aug.

Kirby's bells were rung on 29 September, prior to the funeral service for Bob Evans.

Bob had lived in Kirby for 60+ years and he established the local business BE Event Hire.

A Quarter Peal, to mark the 150th Anniversary of the formation of The Society of Framland Ringers, at Waltham on the Wolds on 29 November 1875, was rung at Kirby by Society members in December. The members held celebratory ringing at each of the Churches in the Framland Area, also to mark it.

An application was made to The Jack Patston Charitable Trust, for a Grant to be used towards the cost of installation of two ventilators in the window in Kirby Church Ringing Room. The Trust awarded £1,000.00, that was paid directly to Kirby DCC. Installation of the ventilators is due in 2026.

Handbells

The Handbell ringers met regularly for practices throughout the year, welcoming welcomed 3 new recruits to the Band – two able to join our contribution to the Carol Service in Kirby Church (Xmas Eve).

14.0 Deanery Synod

Deanery Meetings included a focus on the Minster Community process, as Final Proposals for both the Northern & Southern areas of Framland were put to the Joint Archdeacons' Mission Committee. North Framland has not progressed, with less than 50% of PCCs in favour. NE Leicestershire Minster Community was given the green light and a Coordinating Group across the 28 parishes has formed.

Jessie Tang & Michael Ravuri *(Intercultural Worshipping Community Project)* blessed us with an 'Intercultural Vision' evening at Gaddesby St.Luke's. *"From Genesis to Revelation, Gods story is one of drawing together all peoples into one redeemed people".*

At the end of the year, Rev'd David led the Deanery pre-Advent Reflection here in Frisby Chapel. 'The Light Shines : Glimmers of God's Presence' was a; *"a reflective journey through current affairs & historic liturgy, guided by poetry & helped by imagery".* A summons to the present moment.

15.0 Financial Report *Rev'd David & Ronald Graham*

Ronald Graham volunteered to assist me earlier this year, and you can read more about him & his our Combined Accounts further below. Ronald has engaged with each DCC Treasurer by email, and taken time to consider how best we steward our finances given that the PCC carries legal oversight.

Adjustments have been made to all 6 accounts, being either :-

i) to incorporate the creation of Restricted or Designated Funds

or ii) the reallocations of items to harmonise the 6 sets

None of these amendments affect the Net Result or the Carry Forward.

Ronald has kept separate Files for each DCC, being their Accounts and relevant email exchanges, as well as transfer 'Working Sheets'. Together these form the basis of information for the Independent Examiner. Following the APCM, these resources can be provided to each DCC Treasurer, to show the re-allocations & adjustments made by him.

Ronald has also designed a 'Cashbook Layout' that may help DCC Treasurers in future – to ease their workload; to help combine end-of-year Accounts; to make succession easier when required. A Treasurers' Meeting later in the year would create a space in which to carefully & safely discuss such ideas.

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Ronald writes…

"I am delighted to offer my skills as a Chartered Certified Accountant in support of the Parish.

I was born in Belfast and moved to Loughborough in 1974. As a boy, I was a chorister at All Saints Parish Church and served as Head Choirboy for a couple of years, during which I was confirmed.

After school, I trained with a local accounting practice, worked in Industry, and then spent eight rewarding years at Rainbows Hospice for Children and Young People, ending as Director of Business Resources. I retired in 2022 and now devote much of my time to Parkinson's UK, supporting local groups and regional projects.

I married Helen in 1996 and we lived in Loughborough until nearly eight years ago, when we moved to Sileby. This October marks 20 years since my Parkinson's diagnosis, and I've managed well thanks to medication, resilience, and a determination to live as fully as possible.

I was thrilled to be asked to help with the Parish accounts – and genuinely astonished to learn that Rev'd David had been preparing them himself! I look forward to working with the Parish Officers, finding ways to collaborate closely while keeping the Treasurers' workload manageable.

I appreciate the effort and dedication shown by each of the DCC Treasurers in maintaining their accounts throughout the past year. I would also like to thank them for the assistance they provided, which enabled me to gain a clear understanding of the accounts and prepare the Combined Parish Accounts."

The Parish of the Upper Wreake Consolidated Accounts
Receipts and Payments for the Year ended 31 December 2025
and the Statement of Assets at 31 December 2025

RECEIPTS	2025				2024
	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Total	TOTAL
Fund Raising	£17,150	£0	£1,271	**£18,421**	**£13,304**
Wedding and Funeral Fees	£10,441	£0	£0	**£10,441**	**£6,776**
Donations	£6,008	£0	£13,600	**£19,608**	**£12,520**
Collections	£5,643	£0	£0	**£5,643**	**£4,960**
Sundry	£652	£0	£1,111	**£1,763**	**£1,509**
Grants	£0	£0	£21,000	**£21,000**	**£715**
VAT Reclaim	£2,022	£0	£0	**£2,022**	**£2,319**
Interest	£1,782	£0	£0	**£1,782**	**£624**
Planned (Regular) Giving	£24,797	£0	£0	**£24,797**	**£28,273**
Income Tax Recovered (Gift Aid)	£11,330	£0	£3,400	**£14,730**	**£5,823**
Donated Collections	£1,246	£0	£0	**£1,246**	**£769**
CCLA Transfer	£1,568	£0	£0	**£1,568**	**£2,715**
	£82,638	**£0**	**£40,381**	**£123,019**	**£80,307**
PAYMENTS					
Parish Contribution (Diocese)	£15,546	£0	£0	**£15,546**	**£15,766**
Cluster Levy (SWF)	£5,168	£0	£0	**£5,168**	**£5,100**
Organ Tuning and Repairs	£459	£0	£0	**£459**	**£783**
Power, Rates etc	£4,574	£0	£0	**£4,574**	**£4,397**
Fees paid	£2,158	£0	£0	**£2,158**	**£1,882**
Donations etc	£2,443	£0	£0	**£2,443**	**£1,748**
Church Insurance Premium	£16,938	£0	£0	**£16,938**	**£16,790**
Maintenance Church yard	£4,000	£0	£0	**£4,000**	**£3,035**
Sundry	£5,932	£23	£266	**£6,221**	**£4,088**
Maintenance	£4,921	£0	£1,111	**£6,032**	**£9,553**
Building Repairs/Alarms	£1,149	£0	£0	**£1,149**	**£736**
Major Building Works	£0	£0	£15,868	**£15,868**	**£4,498**
Professional Fees	£2,170	£0	£0	**£2,170**	**£960**
CCLA Transfer	£0	£0	£0	**£0**	**£0**
	£65,458	**£23**	**£17,245**	**£82,726**	**£69,335**
Net movement in funds in the year	**£17,180**	**-£23**	**£23,136**	**£40,293**	**£10,972**
Movement in ADDITIONAL Funds/ Accounts	£0			**£0**	**-£237**
Transfers between funds					
Hoby Designated funds transfers	-£2,366	£2,366		**£0**	**£0**
Kirby restricted funds identified in prior years	-£3,296		£3,296	**£0**	**£0**
Balance of funds at 1 January 2025	£139,698	£43,096	£0	**£182,794**	**£172,059**
Balance of funds at 31 December 2025	**£151,215**	**£45,439**	**£26,433**	**£223,087**	**£182,794**
STATEMENT OF ASSETS					
Cash at Bank and in hand	£97,678	£15,439	£866	£113,983	
Investments - CCLA	£51,130	£0	£25,567	£76,697	
Investments - COIF	£2,407	£30,000	£0	£32,407	
	£151,216	**£45,439**	**£26,433**	**£223,087**	

These accounts were approved by the Board of Trustees and signed on their behalf by

Dated

The notes to the accounts form part of the accounts