

### Who are you?

- We are a rural church in a village setting. The village residents are a diverse strata of society.
- The community comprises of varying levels of faith, from those with no faith at all, through some that are on a journey of discovery, to those that are regular worshippers.

### Where have you come from?

- In the last 2 years we have gone from very few visits of the church to the school to now where there is a weekly visit and once a month the school assembly is held within the church.
- We are a traditional parish church which is developing outreach.
- In the past we have had Sunday schools with regular young attendees but these have disappeared.

### Where are you going?

- More ECO friendly by letting the Churchyard become a wild in a controlled way.
- More diverse ways of getting people into the church, Eg, Regular village lunches, Beer festival.
- Trying to become more inclusive with people of all abilities, future developments of church facilities will help this.
- Intergenerational aspirations.
- Better facilities to encourage people to attend, new toilets and servery.

### What are you doing now?

- Pastoral visits and care.
- Baptism and confirmation preparation.
- Marriage preparation.
- Regular school visits both in-school and the school visiting the church.
- Funeral arrangements and bereavement care.
- Regular services on a rolling cycle, BCP communion, Evensong, Choral or other musical flavour, CW Communion and Service of the word (Family service)
- (Outreach to the rural community).
- Services of commemoration, remembrance services etc.
- Bell ringing team has been set up and welcomes new people in to the church.
- Christian Festival services.
- Food bank collections.
- Village lunches.
- Weekday Morning Prayer via "Zoom" across the Vale of Belvoir churches.

### Where are you seeing the Kingdom of God emerging?

- With school children and their families being engaged.
- The willingness of people to give their time to keep the church going, wardens, flower decorators, cleaners, especially the volunteer clergy on which we depend so much.
- Numbers attending events and services both in and out of church.

### What are you fearful about?

- Some peoples fear of change can be restrictive in the development of the church.
- Losing a sense of control from those above.
- Church closure.
- What does the Minster community mean for our volunteer team, will we be losing some of what we have, and are working hard for.
- Uncertainty.
- Running out of money and what this means.

### What are you hopeful for?

- Soul filled meanderings, time to reflect and contemplate.
- More varied age range to be attending services.
- Having a more engaged community.
- Labyrinth within the new churchyard area.
- A Safe, warm space for people to come. (Wellbeing café)
- Faith becomes the heartbeat of the village community.
- Growing faith in the future.

### How you can pray for us.

- Find the next steps to get people to deepen their own faiths.
- To recognise where God is working.
- To pray for us to listen, watch and nurture.
- To be brave, bold and courageous to take the leap into the deep end, rather than paddle the shallows.

1

**Church name:**ST MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS, HARSTON

**Date:**6 APR 23

**Who are you?**

A church in a hamlet of 27 houses

**Where have you come from?**

**Where are you going?**

**What are you doing now?**

2

Church name: ST MICHAEL AND ALL AGELS, HARSTON

Date: 6 APR 23

Where are you seeing the Kingdom of God emerging?

What are you fearful about?

The continued downward decline of the church

What are you hopeful for?

A good and regular vicar

How you can pray for us.

### Who are you?

The links we have with our community and the connected nature of those on the Church Council with most strands of community life and activity.

The community is well disposed towards the church, we need to work harder to maximise that goodwill to support the financial need of the church

A church in good order. We still have water ingress issues from time to time, but for the most the building is in a good state of repair. We have facilities and a toilet and servery which have transformed the way we can use the building. The recent Open Gardens showed us that.

We now have two accomplished musicians in the village and consider ourselves very lucky to have these skills among us.

We are an Inclusive Church, there for everyone.

### Where have you come from?

We share our Priest in Charge with Brooksby, Rotherby, Ragdale, Frisby and Kirby – The Upper Wreake.

We share our Pioneer curate with these villages and the Framland and Goscote Deanery, although they do have a specific focus on Hoby along with Brooksby.

We work in a wider family of churches in the South West Framland Group. 16 Churches across 3 benefices

We work ecumenically and have a close relationship with Hoby Methodist Centre.

In SWF we share an administrator and are partners on the South West Framland Group Council, and have been now for 15 years

### Where are you going?

We have discovered new volunteers, but we need to change what we do to make it easier for them to stay and belong

We need to look at how we might do fundraising differently a gap between fund raising and running costs grows.

Our churchyard is almost full and the task of taking on additional land offered by the Diocese is complex.

As our services start to look different we are seeing a gradual increase in attendance. How do we sustain the connections made in to the future

### What are you doing now?

We are becoming Eco Friendly. We have our bronze award and are working towards silver. The community is generally supportive of the green agenda of the church and projects supporting rewilding and birds, bats and bees are becoming established.





### Where are you seeing the Kingdom of God emerging?

We have better contact with the children and their families in the village. This had been lacking in recent years.  
A Pioneer Curate who gives strong support who gives 100% and then some more. We are lucky to have such encouragement.

### What are you fearful about?



### What are you hopeful for

We work in and for the community showing Gods love for one and all. We can and do do Church differently.  
Church yard extension ( 2.6 acres of land) and the challenges that this brings but also the opportunities that could benefit the whole of UW.

### How you can pray for us.

**Who are you?**

The building is on the heritage 'at risk' list. The building needs between £150k and £200k for the roof and the works to be carried out. The current temporary felt roof has a life expectancy of 8/10 years.

Fundraising has been good for building community and interest but there has been no huge growth in monies gathered.



**Where have you come from?**

**Where are you going?**

**What are you doing now?**

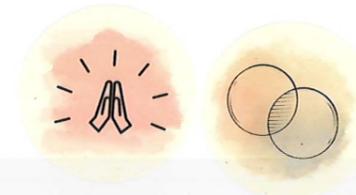
Where are you seeing the Kingdom of God emerging?

What are you fearful about?

What are you hopeful for

How you can pray for us.

Thankful for the joys and the community building in relationships, but concern over the future of this church building.



1

**Church name:** All Saints Knipton (north Leicestershire, nr Belvoir Castle)

**Date:** 24/4/2023

### Who are you?

Grade II listed 12<sup>th</sup> century church, in a village of ~100 people.

Knipton is an estate village, with most houses being rented.  
We are 6 miles south of Bottesford, 7 miles east of Grantham, 10 miles north east of Melton.

Part of the High Framland group of churches.

Ministry is provided by Revd David Cowie (covering 10+ churches centred around Wymondham) and Sue Dawson, lay preacher.  
The church has a service roughly once every 6 weeks, but no regular pattern.

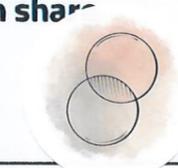
### Where have you come from?

In previous decades, the 'tied' nature of the village meant the residents were older and lived in Knipton for many years, often until they passed away. This meant the numbers attending church was reasonably high, but also that many of those people actively helped out with the church, both in terms of PCC roles but also other activities, eg cleaning, flowers, grounds care, etc.

The church is still regularly used for funerals, often by people who had historic links with Knipton.

The church ran out of money in 2015 and was unable to pay its electricity bill. This led to the church suspending payment of it's £4k parish share

2018 Quinquennial identified over £200k of works.



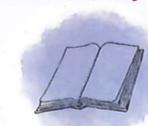
### Where are you going?

There appears little interest in attending church amongst villagers – based on survey feedback and actual attendance at services. This is reflected by a dwindling electoral roll.

The attendees at Knipton services are very largely from other villages.

All PCC & maintenance work now borne by a very small group of 2-3 people.

The church's minimum annual running costs (excluding parish contribution) are twice our income. Hence, no payment of parish share for last 5 years



### What are you doing now?



**Where are you seeing the Kingdom of God emerging?**

Don't have a clear answer to this.

It feels that the weekly zoom services offer a good way of extending the reach of ministry.

**What are you fearful about?****What are you hopeful for?**

That Minster Communities can lead to a better overall result, that matches the opportunity for worship, whilst balancing expenditure and income in a more achievable way than is currently possible.

**How you can pray for us.**

**Who are you?**

Within South West Framland, the Burrough Hill, South Croxton and Upper Wreake Benefices are in a Cluster with shared administration. SWF is in turn part of the Framland Deanery, with its matrix of ministers sharing parochial responsibilities with a range of Deanery-wide ministries. Among us there is a willingness and openness to embrace changes.

**Where are you going?**

- Endeavouring to respond to Diocesan strategy for (a) depth of discipleship (b) growth in number of disciples (c) serving the specific needs of our rural communities.
- Recognising that Diocesan leadership has stated its intention to invest in time, resources and a focus on equipping, we await to see results of this at the local level.
- Seeking to continue to find ways to serve and encourage our congregations and communities, including building sustainable relationships with young people and new residents in each Parish, and offering pastoral support throughout the Benefice.
- Seeking to utilise our resources to build an inclusive, sensitive and available church.
- Making more creative use of Church buildings as places which can be used for a variety of events, both Christian and secular. This will involve engagement with others to fundraise for ongoing repair, restoration and improvements to our churches, and thereby strengthen friendships and relationships.

**Where have you come from?**

We have worked collaboratively in the Southwest Framland group of 16 churches for more than 15 years. And share in the groups centralised administrative provision.

**What are you doing now?**

Rural parishes, renowned for friendliness and community spirit. All within about ten minutes' drive of each other.  
Local economy revolving around farming, equestrian, and small service-based industries; there are pubs, which include restaurant facilities, as well as farm shops/cafes. National Cycle Route 64 weaves its way through the Benefice.  
Beloved ancient church buildings.  
Elderly congregations/church membership with most people in their 70s or above. This diminishes our ability to serve our churches and communities due to restrictions of time, health, personal finances.  
Welcoming of input from Pioneers and other ministers in support of our local clergy.  
Shared House for Duty Associate Priest  
Services held on a rotational basis

**Where are you seeing the Kingdom of God emerging?**

Beautiful film set location  
Beautifully looked after building  
Community help to maintain the grounds and clean the church for services  
Dedicated PCC  
Ernest Cook Trust owns the surrounding farmland  
Victorian Gothic Grade II listed building with excellent wood and stonework carvings.

**What are you fearful about?****What are you hopeful for?**

Increased footfall  
Creative sustainable future for a much-loved church

**How you can pray for us.**

**Who are you?**

1. The worshipping community and supporters of our village Church
2. Members of the village
3. People who have moved away from the village but retain a strong sense of affiliation and affection to the village and church

**Where have you come from?**

1. We are part of a group of churches in the Vale of Belvoir, who on occasions worship and meet together. We also share a well-practised choir who sing at services of Celebrations, and Worship including those of the Church calendar, and a loyal yet small band of bell-ringers
2. A variety of faith backgrounds and faith experience
3. Some of our congregation (and a number of villagers) were born and brought up in the village being christened and married in the Church, attending the Church school, with family members, some going back many generations, buried in our cemetery, and having the Church as a part of their whole lives
4. Others have moved to the village from various areas - local, abroad, relocating from other parts of the country – bringing with them different approaches, experiences, wants and needs (with various levels of approach to the church in terms of fellowship, community or worship)

**Where are you going?**

1. We go into the future with hope of sustainability and need of our local community
2. To encourage others to join us
3. To foster and secure the 'next generation' of church goers in the village

**What are you doing now?**

1. Continuing our faith journey
2. Offering weekly Sunday services, as well as taking baptisms, marriages, blessings, funerals – and celebrating key dates in the Christian (and village) calendar
3. Providing a community café once a week
4. Offering a place of prayer and reflection 24 hours a day
5. Contributing 2 vocational Governors for our CofE village school
6. Holding assemblies, services and offering religious support to our school
7. Working with Clawson Christians Together to hold joint village services and events eg Remembrance Day, Walking with the Cross, Walking with the Donkey, Carol Service, the Monthly Breakfast, a weekly Warm Space and meal

### Where are you seeing the Kingdom of God emerging?

1. In many ways which includes through the joy of special services and gatherings, working and praying together
2. We don't always know/recognise when or where the Kingdom of God is emerging – out of the blue can come balm to the soul, resolve to a problem, peace from anxiety and the answer to a prayer
3. We just know that the Kingdom of God is always there

### What are you fearful about?

1. The many differences between rural and urban parishes not being acknowledged or considered, resulting in a 'one size fits all' centralised approach and thereby losing our uniqueness of being a rural, village church

### What are you hopeful for?

1. The opportunity of growing the Kingdom of God
2. Ideas and support to broaden what we offer
3. Getting to know and working collaboratively with others
4. That the importance of 'localness' is understood and respected i.e., relationships between those offering ministry and those 'receiving' ministry are allowed to grow so when people reach out to Church, for whatever reason, they reach out to someone they have seen around/have spoken to/feel they know or, at the very least, is not perceived a stranger
5. That the message of Faith in God continues and we never lose sight of all we are given in the love of the Lord.

### How you can pray for us.

1. Please pray for the well-being of our ministers – both lay and ordained, as they lead us through this time of uncertainty
2. For wisdom, patience, openness of mind and heart, for all involved in this process, as we navigate this time of change
3. That at all times, we keep God at the centre of everything