



# PARISH PROFILE

FOR THE PARISH OF



IN THE DIOCESE OF SOUTHWELL AND NOTTINGHAM

**one flock, one shepherd, six pastures**

[wivertoninthevale.co.uk](http://wivertoninthevale.co.uk)



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## Welcome to our Parish Profile

God is at work in the parish of Wiverton in the Vale. Over the last 18 months we've formulated a five-year vision and started to introduce promising new initiatives for worship, Bible study, outreach and children's ministry. But the past few years have also brought challenges, culminating in the reluctant retirement of our most recent incumbent due to serious illness. This has not diminished our faith that God has a plan for our parish. We're convinced that there is now an exciting opportunity for you, our next rector, to build on our strong foundations and inspire us with your own ideas. In return we offer you our prayers, friendship and hard work, as well as a wonderful place to make your home.

The parish of Wiverton in the Vale is made up of six rural churches. It lies at the heart of the beautiful countryside of South Nottinghamshire whilst being within easy reach of the towns of Nottingham, Bingham, Newark, Grantham and Leicester. The successful amalgamation of our six churches into one parish in 2017 rationalised our administration, thereby allowing us to focus on our spiritual development and pastoral care. We're now well established as a single parish, with much shared worship, fellowship and teamwork. We're proud to be visible in our communities, witnessing our love of our Lord Jesus Christ and offering worship, welcome and pastoral care to people of all ages and backgrounds. With the efficient support of our parish administrator, PCC and other volunteers, our finances and governance are in good order and our church buildings are generally in good repair. We have a long record of paying or exceeding our full parish share and we're committed to working to meet our future obligations.

We have a strong sense of mission. We offer a pattern of different types of services and house groups across the parish and have embraced technology to provide online access. We've recently initiated monthly worship/prayer evenings and parish retreat days and have run nine successful Alpha courses over the past dozen or so years. In addition to social events and fundraising activities across the parish, popular community initiatives include a Coffee, Cake and Chat group, a Pop-Up Café, and a Baby Club / Friday Playgroup. We've just completed our first lay-led Bereavement Journey and plan to offer it again soon. We're also keen participants in Eco Church. Our greatest priority now is to increase our ministry to children, young people and families, especially as our population has recently expanded with new housing developments. We already have good links with a church school and two other schools in the parish. Our strong relationship with our schools is ripe for future development. Indeed, several young parents have recently become involved in planning and leading a monthly Family Praise service.

Please do read on to learn more about how we hope you can lead us forward and share the love of Jesus in our parish. This Parish Profile is intended to be read in conjunction with the more detailed background information on our parish website. If you would like a printed copy of this document please contact us at [admin@wivertoninthevale.co.uk](mailto:admin@wivertoninthevale.co.uk).

# Our Diocese



## THE DIOCESE OF SOUTHWELL & NOTTINGHAM

### Growing Disciples: Compassion Confidence Courage

A statement from the Bishop of Southwell & Nottingham,  
the Rt Revd Paul Williams and Archdeacon of Nottingham, the  
Ven Phil Williams



The Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham incorporates the City of Nottingham, the whole County of Nottinghamshire and five parishes in South Yorkshire. The population is 1.15 million – 51% live in the greater Nottingham conurbation, 31% in ex-mining areas and 18% in rural. There are 305 churches (252 parishes), served by 119 stipendiary clergy and 228 licensed lay ministers.

In 2024 we launched our refreshed vision of **Living Hope for the city, towns, villages of Nottinghamshire and beyond**. We believe the presence of thriving, growing churches across the diocese is vital for people to discover Living Hope and make the best decision anyone could ever make for their lives – to become a disciple of Jesus Christ. To enable this vision, we are committed to our mission of **growing disciples of Christ with compassion, confidence and courage**. To support both parishes and the diocese in implementing our mission we have identified **7 areas of focus**: inspiring worship, reaching younger, enhancing diversity, growing leaders, enabling commitment, encouraging generosity and nurturing prayer. This vision is set out in more detail on [our website](#).

'It is my hope that each worshipping community in the diocese will develop a compelling picture of its own future in God's purposes with an expectation of growing numerically and in the scope of its mission. It is my prayer that the new rector of Wiverton in the Vale will have the creative leadership and imagination to develop discipleship, plan for growth and reach out to the unchurched of all ages in its locality.'

As you consider the rector's role at Wiverton in the Vale, may I encourage you to take time to look over and reflect on our diocesan vision as part of your discernment as to whether God is calling you to be part of this diocese at this exciting time.

I look forward to welcoming the new rector of Wiverton in the Vale to join us on this faith-filled journey.

**Rt Revd Paul Williams,**  
**Bishop of Southwell & Nottingham**







## East Bingham Deanery

### Our Deanery

**East Bingham Deanery** fully supports the diocesan vision of: Living Hope, growing disciples of Christ with Compassion, Confidence and Courage. We value and encourage collaboration amongst our clergy and laity and also those ecumenical relationships which prosper in some of the larger benefices. We look at places and groups across the deanery where there is potential for new worshipping communities or the refreshing and revitalising of existing ones. We are receptive to new initiatives and engage fully with the laity on its response to the diocesan vision. Together we are on a journey of faith as we seek to follow as Jesus leads us. Although our churches are all individually different, we hold a common faith.

**We are the largest deanery** in the Nottingham Archdeaconry, having 34 open churches with parishes grouped together into 12 benefices. Save for one single-church parish, it is made up of benefices which are either multi-parish or multi-church. It has a mix of full and part-time stipendiary clergy and self-supporting, part-time, House-for-Duty incumbents.

**Giving for mission** is encouraged and all parishes are encouraged to organise regular giving initiatives with assistance from the diocesan finance team. Oversight of these initiatives and regular teaching on giving is an expectation of all incumbents. All parishes are expected to pay 100% of their parish share and are encouraged to do this by monthly standing order.

**The deanery is led** by the Area Dean and Lay Chair supported by a part-time paid administrator. They in turn are supported by a Standing Committee made up of clergy and laity who together form a committed leadership team.

**Deanery Synod** meets three times a year and encourages all clergy to take an active role in the affairs of the deanery. It looks to its clergy to encourage parish representatives on Synod to do likewise. Our voice is heard through the Area Dean (who is a member of the Diocesan Finance Committee and elected member of Diocesan Synod) and the Lay Chair (a member of the Kinoulton St Luke PCC and elected member of Diocesan Synod), thereby ensuring that the challenges faced by the rural Church are addressed at diocesan level. As well as discussing formal business at synod, we also hold regular 'breakout groups' during which members of synod, both lay and ordained, can discuss together the challenges and encouragements that we have, and to learn from each other. This is much valued, and has led to several deanery initiatives as we learn to work together better.

**The Deanery Chapter** meets approximately 8 times a year, alternating online and in-person meetings, usually monthly excluding Easter, July, August and Christmas. All clergy, including some of our retired colleagues living in the deanery, are invited to meetings. It holds events to include LLMs and each year also gives a lunch for its retired clergy and LLM colleagues, by way of thanks for their help throughout the year. We think it is a great deanery to be part of, and we look forward to welcoming you to the team!

We would be happy for prospective candidates to be in touch with either of us to discuss how the vacant benefice fits into the deanery.

**Rev'd Canon Stephen Hippisley-Cox, Area Dean**

**Lesley Haig, Lay Chair**



## Who Are We?

The six churches in our parish are at the heart of our rural communities, offering worship, spiritual support, company, comfort and care to people of all ages and backgrounds. We especially want you to know that:

- Our shared love of the Lord Jesus Christ permeates all that we do
- Everything we do begins, continues and ends in prayer
- We have faith that God will show us the way forward for our parish and that the Holy Spirit will help us grow disciples with compassion, confidence and courage
- We're open to new ideas and approaches
- We're enthusiastic, friendly and welcoming
- We're hard-working, with a variety of talents and skills, and we enjoy teamwork
- Our merger into a single parish has enhanced our unity, fellowship and shared worship
- Our merger into a single parish has increased administrative efficiency, allowing us to focus on spiritual and pastoral matters
- We've developed a five-year plan for mission as described on our [parish website](#)
- We're keen to build on current initiatives and take on new ideas
- A major priority is to develop our ministry to children, young people and families.
- Existing strong links with the three primary schools in the parish, including a Church of England school, are ripe for development







## Our Next Rector – Skills, Qualities and Experience

We're looking for someone who can offer:

- A love of Jesus overflowing into love of people of all ages and backgrounds
- Communication skills as a preacher and teacher who can help us grow in faith
- Visionary leadership with enjoyment of teamwork and a willingness to delegate and empower others to use their talents to build God's kingdom
- Commitment and ability to help us grow in numbers through the 2030 Diocesan Vision of Growing Disciples with Compassion, Confidence and Courage
- Experience and enthusiasm to build on groundwork in our children and youth ministries
- An appetite for rural life and an understanding of its needs to help us deepen our relationship with our communities, share our faith and demonstrate that rural ministry can thrive

Mission priorities:

- Consolidating/increasing our faith and prayer life with spiritual nourishment
- Growing God's kingdom by worship, evangelism and outreach, and through occasional offices
- Building on the aspirations of our recent visionary process
- Developing new initiatives in ministry to people of all ages
- Reaching out to children and young people so that we form a truly all-age worshipping community that is relevant at every stage of life
- Building on our existing ministry in our three local primary schools
- Engaging and accompanying people at each stage of their journey in faith
- Recognising individual talents and developing them into personal ministry
- Meeting pastoral needs and providing care of souls in our communities
- Increasing planned giving and teaching about our journey of generosity

We offer our new rector:

- Love, prayers, friendship and a supportive church family
- A beautiful place to live and work in the centre of the country, with excellent local facilities and schools, easy travel to nearby towns and good access to bus, rail and air transport
- Varied rural communities and churches, with opportunities for outreach in new housing developments
- Practical help, including support from a parish administrator and experienced office-holders, so that you can prioritise spiritual/pastoral work
- A long record of paying or exceeding our full parish share and a commitment to working to meet our future obligations





## A Message from our Children and Young Families

At a recent Family Praise service, we thought about "leadership" and learnt about Peter, the rock on which the church would be built. This led us to think about the qualities we're hoping for in a new rector. Here's what the children and their parents and carers said:







## Our Vision for the Parish in Growing Disciples of Christ with Compassion, Confidence and Courage

### Where are we now?

In mid-2024 we conducted a five-week process to evaluate our situation as a parish, discern what Jesus wants us to do and establish our priorities for the next five years. Weekly themes were introduced at Sunday morning services for mid-week discussion by Discovery Groups in parishioners' homes or online. Through prayer, sermons, Bible study, discussions and a congregational survey we reflected on our relationships with God, with other Christians and with the wider world.

We considered:

- how we can grow in love and encounter with God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- how we can deepen our love for the disciples with whom we travel
- how to engage with our communities and share God's love through words and actions

Our conclusions were that our church family has life and energy, with a strong sense of welcome, friendship and community. The results of a congregational survey indicated that we're assured of God's love, that we feel positive about our churches, that we experience love and acceptance in our congregations and that we try to follow the teachings of Jesus in our lives. However, we identified a need for growth of our churches, especially in our outreach to children, young people and families. We also need to increase our reading and understanding of the Bible to ensure that we're people of the Word and to help us respond to questions from others.

### Where would we like to be and how can you lead us forward?

Our greatest wish is to live for God in everything we do and to share our faith across the six pastures of our parish. In communicating our five-year vision for our parish, we used a metaphor of a bespoke vineyard that produces a rich and beautiful wine for all to taste and see. Please see our [parish website](#) for more information about this. At the heart of this aspiration is the **2030 Diocesan Vision of Growing Disciples with Compassion, Confidence and Courage**, which identifies seven areas of focus for mission and ministry. Please read on to discover more about our current practice and how we hope you can help us develop and grow so that we may transform lives and share the love of Jesus.

## Inspiring worship

Worship is the foundation of all we strive to achieve as a church family. It enables us to express our faith through shared prayer, scripture, music and sacrament. Our aim is for our worship to be inspirational and the most important event of our week. In a recent poll of church members, there was agreement that worship in our parish is one of our greatest strengths.

We invite parishioners to participate in services and events at any of our churches, regardless of the village in which they live. Whilst there is much pride in our individual churches and villages, the willingness of many to travel to different venues within the parish has enhanced our worship, developed our sense of unity and provided spiritual and practical support for everyone.

As described in our [parish website](#) Holy Communion is celebrated somewhere in the parish on a rotational basis each Sunday. We also offer a variety of traditional and informal services throughout the church year. Family Praise followed by afternoon tea appeals to young families. Other regular events include special services for festivals as well as re-enactments of the last supper on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday pilgrimages across the countryside and sunrise services on Easter Sunday. We also offer morning worship, healing services, pets' services, environment services and memorial services for the bereaved. A Father's Day service is held each year in a local pub. Quarterly United Village services are valued by people of different denominations and from other local churches. We enjoy occasional celebratory worship with refreshments afterwards, such as "Pimm's, Pews and Praise" and "Picnic and Praise". Our all-parish choir is led by a talented musician and singer. It meets weekly, preparing for occasional evensongs and contributing songs or anthems for other services. Christmas is a highlight, with the choir "on tour" to enhance carol services across the parish.

As for any church community, challenges in worship include the competing attractions of a busy and secular world, individual differences in preferred styles and practical difficulties in finding convenient times for everyone. There is a danger of neglecting the needs of working people, those with family/caring responsibilities or people who are housebound or with illnesses that restrict their access to worship and activities. We've addressed some of these issues by offering a variety of styles and times of worship and by embracing technology to provide online services and house groups. Holy Communion is taken to parishioners at home if illness prevents them from attending church. We also record readings and sermons from our Holy Communion services so that they can be accessed from [our website](#) each week. Morning Prayer is conducted via Zoom twice a week.

We've recently initiated monthly prayer and worship gatherings on weekday evenings. We've also held three parish retreat days with prayer stations, activities, shared meals and worship. These have all been well-attended and deepened our encounter with God. Our Advent retreat was subsequently adapted for our church school. We're delighted that the school is now keen to participate in more joint initiatives and retreats.

Services and events at all six churches are publicised in fortnightly notices which are distributed by email to regular subscribers, hand-delivered to "offline" parishioners and displayed on our [parish website](#), on noticeboards and [parish Facebook page](#). We'd like to improve our publicity, use of social media and online presence and believe this would increase engagement with young people.

Our Statistics for Mission from 2015 to 2024 are shown on our [parish website](#). The figures for 2020 and 2021 were disrupted by the effects of the Covid pandemic but attendance at a service in an average week in October has since increased from 44 in 2022 to 55 in 2024. Attendances at Christmas and Easter were 337 and 108 respectively in 2024. Our worshipping community currently comprises 103 adults and 12 children. There are 121 people on the parish electoral roll. We hope our new rector will bring more ideas for worship, communication and teaching. We're keen to improve our skills and develop all these areas.



## Reaching younger

We see it as a priority to expand our ministry to children and young adults so that our congregations truly represent our communities and combine the experience of long-standing church members with the fresh perspective of younger people. Our aim is for our churches to be relevant, welcoming and accessible to all people at every stage of life.

There is immediate potential for growth as our population has increased with young families in recently-completed housing developments. Much groundwork has already been done in establishing a weekly Baby Club/Friday Playgroup in church and a monthly Family Praise service on Sunday afternoons. We already have warm relationships with staff at the three primary schools in our parish and there is great enthusiasm for this to continue and grow. The children at Langar Church of England School attend St Andrew's church for services such as Easter, Harvest, Remembrance, Christmas and School Leaving. Pupils in Cropwell Bishop and Colston Bassett enjoy visits to their local churches during the school year. We also have contacts with a youth club and a scout group within the parish.

The potential to reach younger is an exciting opportunity for our parish at the moment. We hope our new rector will build on our work so far and share our commitment to developing this crucial ministry.

## Enhancing diversity

As a rural parish, our local population has varying needs and wishes, and we strive to meet them with a range of styles of worship, as well as events and activities to appeal to different groups of people. The diversity of our parish has grown as it has expanded with new housing, and we're keen to embrace the opportunities that brings. Although we're physically constrained by our old church buildings, we do our best to facilitate access and provision for disabled people, for example with audio loop systems and sensitivity to their needs. We also enjoy welcoming people from other churches or denominations. We have particularly strong links, including a joint all-parish choir, with members of our local Methodist circuit.

Church members are well-known within our villages and we interact with our communities in many ways. Following the lead of Jesus, who often incorporated food and drink into his ministry, we provide breakfasts and other morning refreshments in different villages across the parish. Unconditional free hospitality at a weekly Baby Club/Friday Playgroup attracts youngsters, parents and carers from across the parish, including residents of our new housing developments. Our Coffee/Cake/Chat group in Cropwell Bishop and Pop-up Café in Langar are popular not only as a meeting place for parishioners but also as part of the national Warm Space/Warm Welcome initiative to provide practical help and comfort to people facing hardship. The choir has enjoyed performing at a local nursing home and warden-assisted housing. Our Bereavement Journey sessions are offered to anyone of any faith (or no faith) or background.

Over the years, events in our villages have included concerts, fêtes, quiz nights, exhibitions, coffee mornings, craft fairs, open-air services, a ceilidh and even teddy-bear parachute jumps from a church tower. Most recently, compelling dramatisations of Biblical events by an external group, the Lamps Collective, attracted audiences of about 70 people, including non-church members.

In a recent poll of church members, we agreed that one of our greatest challenges was to enhance our diversity. By providing hospitality, care and activities for all people in our communities, we hope our new rector will help us demonstrate the love of our Lord Jesus Christ so that all may find a place within our church family, regardless of age, background or starting point in discipleship.

## Growing leaders

Development of new leaders is crucial for the succession of the church. There is often a reluctance for parishioners to volunteer for such roles, as they may lack confidence or believe they have insufficient knowledge or experience. It takes time and effort to provide the necessary encouragement, training, ongoing support and strategies for dealing with difficult questions or situations. It sometimes seems quicker and easier for those with long-standing roles not to delegate their tasks. As well as developing the skills of new volunteers, we all need to show generosity and

patience in sharing knowledge, building the confidence of others and risking imperfection or mistakes. We also need to recognise that we are all leaders in the way we influence others with our words and actions, and that these leadership skills apply to everyone.

During illnesses of clergy and vacancies in our parish over the past few years, some lay members of our church family have displayed impressive talents in leading services, sharing their faith and integrating people into our churches. More recently, church members, including young parents, have received training and taken leadership roles for the first time in an Alpha course, the Bereavement Journey and Family Praise services. All these people will need continued support and development of their roles. We're fortunate to have good diocesan training resources and need to encourage their use.

We hope that as you get to know us as individuals, you will use your own skills and experience to encourage all church members to identify and use their talents in the ministry of the church, whether in overt leadership or in their interactions with others. We hope you will motivate us to step outside our comfort zone and then support us with your insight, feedback, mentoring, supervision and prayers.

## Enabling commitment

As Christians we're called to draw others to faith in Christ. Over the last dozen or so years our parish has run nine Alpha courses, the most recent finishing in January 2025. Leaders and participants alike have found them to be rewarding, and sometimes life-changing, in initiating, reviving or deepening faith.

We hold regular house groups at different times and venues (including online) to increase options for attendance. It's notable that approximately a third of our adult worshipping community belong to these groups and benefit from their fellowship, encouragement and teaching. We see this as a particular strength of our parish.

As well as welcoming all requests for infant baptisms, we encourage young people and adults to undergo baptism and confirmation where appropriate. As a parish with strong links to both diocese and deanery, we're able to draw upon their resources for deepening faith beyond these steps. In order to encourage new disciples to continue their journey, we must as a parish stay with them every step of the way. We therefore seek a rector who will support initiatives such as the Alpha course and will help us find ways to bring others to discipleship and to travel with them on their journey.

## Encouraging generosity

We encourage parishioners to respond to God's spirit of abundance with generosity of time, skills and finances and in working for a fair and just world. In monetary terms this is reflected in our support for charities and humanitarian aid, as well as for our churches, and our long-standing commitment to paying our full parish share. On occasion it has been a privilege for us to pay more than our share to support neighbouring parishes that were in difficulty at the time. We did so because we understand the connection of ministry costs to growing disciples more widely. We remain committed to working to meet our future obligations.

We're proud to maintain our parish finances and governance in good order. The success of additional fundraising for restoration/refurbishment of our buildings emphasises the importance of our churches to our communities. Such appeals are supported by churchgoers and non-churchgoers alike.

We respond to God's generosity in creation by taking an active and visible lead in stewardship of the natural world within our villages. All six churches in the parish are registered on the Eco Church scheme and have received bronze awards. Parishioners appreciate the careful maintenance of our churchyards and enjoy outdoor events such as Snowdrop Saturdays and moth surveys. We're proud to offer free hospitality and refreshments at all our services and regular groups.



## Nurturing prayer

Everything we do must begin, continue and end with prayer. In our parish we pray

- as individuals: daily quiet time with Bible reading;
- individual "arrow prayers" at any time, for people or situations;
- in groups: house groups, prayer groups, worship evenings;
- prayer ministry: one-to-one with individuals in need of help to pray;
- during services: more formal intercessions for the needs of others and ourselves.

Learning to pray is a lifelong journey. Introduction to prayer is an important part of our children's ministry in schools and Family Praise services, as well as our Alpha courses. Improvement and maturation of our prayer life is a frequent theme of house groups, courses and our parish retreat days.

Prayer will be at the heart of every step in the recruitment and appointment of our new rector. We hope that he/she will teach and inspire us to develop our prayer lives and help us discern what God is saying to us as a parish and as individuals.





## The Parish of Wiverton in the Vale

### Our Area

The Parish of Wiverton in the Vale was formed in March 2017 by the amalgamation of six former parishes which previously constituted the Wiverton Group:

- St John the Divine, Colston Bassett
- St Giles, Cropwell Bishop
- St Michael and All Angels, Elton
- All Saints, Granby cum Sutton
- St Andrew, Langar cum Barnstone
- Holy Trinity, Tythby cum Cropwell Butler

The parish encompasses eleven villages/hamlets within an area of approximately 40 square miles. It sits within the delightful and largely undiscovered countryside of the Vale of Belvoir.

The parish is mostly rural in character. In the 2021 census the population of the entire parish was recorded as 4286 but recent housing developments have since added about 100 new homes. The population of its largest village, Cropwell Bishop, is about 1900. One of the smaller villages in the parish is Tythby, with a population of about 70, but its church serves a wide area that encompasses its larger neighbour, Cropwell Butler, outlying farms and hamlets and part of a housing development in Upper Saxondale. Many people commute to work, but there are a number of employers within the parish: industrial and small business units near Langar and Cropwell Bishop; farming and food production enterprises and various retail and hospitality providers. The parish is home to arguably the country's two finest cheeses, with Stilton cheese dairies at Cropwell Bishop and Colston Bassett. Some villagers are self-employed and/or work from home. Still others are retired or not in employment. In the 2021 census 54% of respondents identified as Christian, in comparison with the national average of 46%.

| Age                     | Proportion of parish population in 2021 |
|-------------------------|---|
| 0-19                    | 20%                                     |
| 20-44                   | 21%                                     |
| 45-69                   | 39%                                     |
| 70+                     | 20%                                     |
| <b>Total population</b> | <b>4286</b>                             |

As in other rural areas, the wealthy and poor often live side-by-side. The housing stock is mainly private with some social housing in Cropwell Bishop and Cropwell Butler. Cropwell Bishop in particular is home to many young families and has a recent development of 85 new homes. There has also



The centre of the parish is about five miles from the market town of Bingham, which has a good range of facilities including shops and supermarkets, a leisure centre and a railway station. We are also within easy reach of larger towns such as Nottingham, Newark, Grantham and Leicester. Many villagers commute to these and other locations. There are good rail links to London from Grantham, Newark or Nottingham. East Midlands Airport is 20 miles away. There are regular bus services from Cropwell Bishop to Nottingham, Bingham and other nearby villages. School buses also run through the villages including from Cropwell Bishop to Toot Hill comprehensive school in Bingham, which was recently described as the top secondary school in the county.

There is a Methodist Chapel in Cropwell Butler, which is pleased to co-operate with the parish in scheduling services and wholeheartedly supports occasional united services in Cropwell Bishop. Local worshippers from other denominations or churches also attend and contribute to these services as together we bear witness to our shared Christian faith.

colstonbassettparishcouncil.co.uk    cropwellbishopplan.co.uk    cropwellbutler.com  
granbycumsutton.org    langarbarnstone.co.uk







## Our Churches

The six working churches in the parish of Wiverton in the Vale are at the heart of our communities, both physically and spiritually. Each has its own characteristics, from the flexibility of seating and spaciousness of our largest church, St Andrew's in Langar (nicknamed the Cathedral of the Vale), to the charm of our smallest church, St Michael and All Angels, in Elton. The parish is also home to a ruined Norman church in Colston Bassett, which was replaced by the current church of St John the Divine in 1892 but is still used occasionally as an atmospheric venue for outdoor services.

Apart from St John the Divine, all our working churches date from the 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> centuries. They are beautiful settings for worship and offer havens of peace and solace for our communities. Several of our churches are kept open every day to allow constant access for everyone. Parishioners and visitors often comment on our warm welcome and the feeling of the prayers of many generations. Our [parish website](#) provides more information about the history, architecture and individual roles of our churches in the villages they serve.

Stewardship of our historic buildings is both a privilege and a constraint. It's all too easy to focus on church maintenance at the expense of spiritual and pastoral matters. The design of our ancient buildings often limits the flexibility and comfort of their use. Each church has its own issues and we're mindful of the need to preserve our heritage, but we're also keen to adapt our buildings for modern worship and service to the community. Installation of toilets and kitchen facilities in the churches of Langar and Cropwell Bishop has improved the resources we offer, and both churches are used for concerts and meetings. Kitchen facilities and solar panels have been installed in the church in Elton. The church at Tythby has a toilet and kitchen. The churches at Colston Bassett and Granby use toilets and running-water facilities in nearby village halls. Please see our [parish website](#) for details of the most recent quinquennial inspections of each church.







## Our Schools

Our parish is home to primary schools in Cropwell Bishop, Langer and Colston Bassett.

We have strong links with the Langer Church of England Primary School, which has a supportive head teacher, Mr Jamie Walker-Jones:

*"At Langer C of E Primary School, we strive to live life in all its fullness. We are proud of our strong links with the village community, our close relationship with the church, and the Christian values that guide all we do. The headteacher and leadership of the school are committed to walking hand in hand with the community and making sure that Christian values are lived out in the daily life of our school. Our Christian distinctiveness operates across the curriculum and permeates everything that we do. Through collective worship, lessons, and our charity work, children are encouraged to grow in faith, kindness and service. Celebrations in church, from harvest festivals to Easter retreats, give our children a wider view of Christianity and a sense of belonging to something bigger than themselves. Our children are already confident and enthusiastic leaders of worship, and we would particularly enjoy the opportunity to work alongside a rector to develop the children's spiritual leadership."*

*We would love to welcome a rector who will be part of this journey with us — someone who can walk closely with the children and staff, offering spiritual guidance and encouragement, and helping us to shape the future direction of our Christian life together. The rector would find in our school family a community that is warm, open and ready to share in new ideas as we live out our Christian mission side by side."*

Although Cropwell Bishop Primary School is not a Church of England school, it has close links to the parish. The children enjoy trips to the local church during the school year as well as visits and teaching from clergy and church members.

There is a small private primary school in Colston Bassett, which occasionally uses the village church for services:

*"Colston Bassett School has enjoyed visits from the parish rector on a bi-weekly basis and we found these regular visits beneficial in developing and maintaining an appreciation of spirituality and faith through songs and entertaining stories. The visits are instrumental in developing an understanding of the wider community and the deeper benefits of faith in our lives. We are keen to foster and develop a community of tolerance and support in our small but diverse environment. The school values the connection to the church and the local community and we hope we can continue to expand on the events we already hold in St John the Divine Church on an annual basis."*

*Mrs Caroline Newcome, Headteacher, Colston Bassett School*







## Our Rectory

The rectory is in Cropwell Bishop, the largest village in the parish. It doubles as an attractive, welcoming family home as well as a space for meetings or house groups if that is something you're happy to offer. Spacious accommodation, including four bedrooms and two bathrooms along with a delightful rear garden, provides for all your needs when not on duty. Situated in a quiet location just a few minutes' walk from St Giles' Church and all village amenities, it is in an ideal spot allowing you to engage with the community when you need to, at the same time as providing a very private and comfortable home. Cropwell Bishop has everything you need for day-to-day living including a GP surgery, primary school and nursery, Co-op/post office, convenience store, two pubs, a sandwich/coffee shop, cheese shop/delicatessen/café, butcher, hairdresser and beauty salon. For more information about the village, please take a look at [cropwellbishopplan.co.uk](http://cropwellbishopplan.co.uk).







## Our Team

Supporting you and sharing the vision with you will be a team of folk whose skills and capacity to “go the extra mile” in their love of God is arguably unmatched in a rural setting.

The parish operates a system of **home teams** made up of parishioners from our individual churches. Each team reports to the PCC via its elected representatives and oversees the day-to-day running, community interaction and fundraising for its own church. Two of our smaller communities (Granby and Elton) don't have formal home teams, but the equivalent duties are carried out by members of these churches. The system was implemented when we merged into one parish and works well.

At the helm of each home team is the **elected churchwarden or a PCC representative**. “Setting God's People Free” – the initiative introduced by The Archbishop's Council in 2017 – cast a spotlight on the role of the laity and lay ministry. Whilst the ethos of SGPF has enabled the work of our churchwardens and those members of the laity who deliver ministry to be shared across the parish, it also allows our system of home teams to buy into the initiative with benefits across the parish.

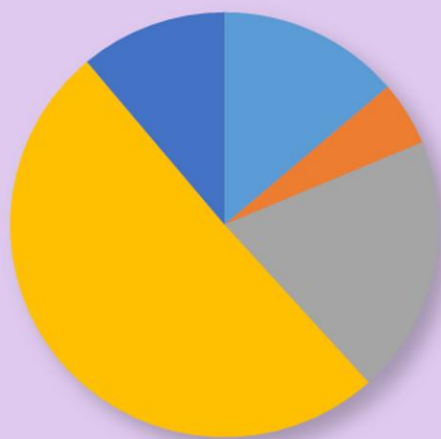
At the next level, your team of **PCC and four churchwardens** will take much of the heavy lifting of administration from you. Honed and developed over periods of taking far-reaching decisions in previous absences of an incumbent, the PCC provides a rich vein of experience for you to draw upon. It comprises 10 members, representing all six churches, plus two *ex officio* members and the parish administrator, who does not vote but records the minutes.

Our part-time paid **administrator** fulfils tasks previously carried out by the rector, with the aim of increasing the rector's time for mission. Supporting you and the PCC, the administrator is joined by an experienced **treasurer** with a professional background in finance. Our policies on issues such as safeguarding, privacy, health and safety, charitable giving, infant baptism, holy communion, marriage and the ministry of ordained women are provided in our [parish website](#).

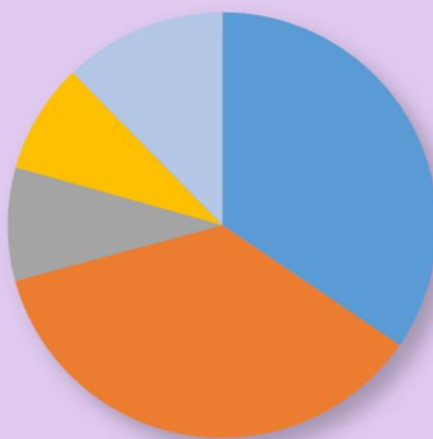
Ministry within the parish is currently provided by **one licensed lay minister (reader), one recognised lay minister and one authorised lay minister**. During periods of vacancy a team of retired clergy have officiated at Holy Communion and some additional services. They have been inspirational in their dedication and will be a source of valuable wisdom to you. Overlaying all this are your **congregations**. Here you will find folk who will not shirk from doing what they and their skills allow them to deliver in terms of the greatest gift of all, namely their time.

Church members take an active part in worship, including leading intercessions, reading lessons, welcoming worshippers, providing refreshments and administering the chalice. Others support our worship by singing in the choir, playing the organ or providing other musical accompaniment. We have a team of keen bellringers, and for some this has been a way into, or back into, wider church life. There is also a **quiet army of volunteers** who help with church maintenance/repairs, churchyard maintenance, cleaning, flower-arranging, sacristan duties, administrative/financial tasks, delivering notices and fundraising. Still others visit and support parishioners in need or provide transport to services and activities. The involvement of non-churchgoers in many of these tasks reflects the importance they attach to the presence of the church in their communities.

INCOME



EXPENDITURE



## Financial Summary

The parish finances are well managed and stewarded by our treasurer, a former banker. The accounts currently show a surplus of £ 46,000 in unrestricted funds. Restricted funds total £ 34,600 and endowed funds £ 124,000. The turnover of the parish in its last full year was £ 121,000. The full accounts for 2024 can be viewed on [our website](#).

In terms of giving, the parish is well supported by its church family as well as irregular or non-attending parishioners who see the benefits that flow from a strong church at the centre of their communities. History shows just how imaginative the parish has been in bespoke funding campaigns for projects to improve and maintain the fabric of our buildings. Time and time again the response has been generous and targets have been met. Our most recent figures show that there are currently 162 participants in our planned giving programme, providing a total income of £ 69,376 per year. This is equivalent to an average of £ 36 per person per month, although additional donations may be made as church offertory. We have recently started using a digital giving device to allow cashless donations by visitors and as an alternative option to cash for offertories during services.

The parish is committed to paying 100 % of the allocated parish share, reflecting an historic commitment to payment in full by each of the six former parishes. When requested and funds have allowed, we have sometimes paid extra to help other parishes that were in difficulty at the time. We did this because we understand the connection of ministry costs to growing disciples more widely.

| Year | Total parish share (paid in full) |
|------|-----------------------------------|
| 2020 | £ 66,300                          |
| 2021 | £ 66,156                          |
| 2022 | £ 70,152                          |
| 2023 | £ 68,760                          |
| 2024 | £ 72,259                          |

As for other parishes in the diocese, our parish share is set to increase over the next 10 years under the Journey of Generosity initiative. The diocesan trajectory for parish share for Wiverton in the Vale is £ 125,000 per year by 2035. This is a challenging sum but under new leadership and working as a team to grow new disciples in Christ, we aspire to meet the target so that the costs of ministry are met. Like other parishes, it will be a mission priority for us to develop a long-term financial strategy, communicate the need for sacrificial giving and increase planned giving within the parish.





## Our Final Message

We hope you've enjoyed getting to know us through our Parish Profile. To find out more about us and what it's like to be part of God's family here, we urge you to visit our website at [wivertoninthevale.co.uk](http://wivertoninthevale.co.uk). It's a mine of information and is updated almost daily. You can learn more about our diocese from [southwell.anglican.org](http://southwell.anglican.org).

Our prayer is that you'll be inspired to come and join us. We hope you'll bring your own personal approach and ideas to help us build on the foundation of our five-year vision and take it still further. Our over-riding aim is to bring the love of God to the communities we serve. With your help, we know we can increase the depth of our compassionate discipleship, our confidence in Christ and our courage in witnessing to him.

Recent housing developments in our parish and successful groundwork in children's ministry, especially in the Church of England school in our parish, present a unique opportunity for us to reach younger and improve the diversity of our congregations. With our underlying strengths of faith, fellowship and efficient administration, we're in a good position to prioritise outreach to children and young adults. We need leadership and guidance to ensure that we nurture the skills of younger church members so that the future of our churches is assured. We look to the future with optimism.

Please be assured that we're a faithful, friendly and committed team and that we'll do everything we can to support you in your ministry. We look forward to meeting you and working together to grow God's kingdom in our parish.



