

The Parish of The Upper Wreake Annual Report 2020

The Parish of The Upper Wreake Parish consists of the churches of All Saints Hoby, All Saints Ragdale, All Saints Rotherby, St. Michael & All Angels Brooksby, St. Peter Kirby Bellars and St. Thomas of Canterbury Frisby-on-the-Wreake

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 2021)

	Brooksby	Frisby	Hoby	Kirby	Ragdale	Rotherby	Total
2021	9	22	38	20	12	13	114
2020	8	19	35	16	12	13	103

PCC Members:

Chair:	The Revd David Harknett
Vice-Chair:	Malcolm Britton, Reader (<i>also Deanery Synod & Diocesan</i>)
Secretary:	Josie Brown (<i>also Deanery Synod & Diocesan Synod</i>) Ex-officio
Treasurer:	Vic Allsop
<i>Elected Members:</i>	
Frisby-on-the- Wreake:	Pru Smith (CW), Simon Blake (CW)
Hoby:	Vic Allsop (CW), Maureen Coleman (CW), June Allsop
Kirby Bellars:	Sheila Taylor
Ragdale:	Jane Burgess (CW), Liz Buxton
Rotherby:	Sue Smith (CW), Lesley Potter (CW),
Brooksby:	Malcolm Britton (CW), Jeanne Knowles (CW)
<i>Co-opted Members:</i>	Janet Norburn (<i>Safeguarding Officer</i>)

CW = Churchwarden

1.0 Priest in Charge's Report

VUCA is a military term popular with businesses, but it seems appropriate for the coronavirus pandemic and its aftermath: Volatile; Uncertain; Complex; Ambiguous. We face challenges that have no solutions, yet 'futurist' & author Bob Johansen advocates for "positive change-agents in the midst of chaos, *creating* the future". His language echoes the opening verses of the bible; "*Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep*" or the "void". The Spirit of God, too, was "*hovering over the waters*", brooding like a bird, which links with the opening words of Genesis chapter 1; "*In the beginning God created the heavens & the earth*". God brings order to a chaotic world, working step-by-step to create a world which is thriving with life. A world filled with a diversity of plants, animals and even people, which God creates as male and female. A world joyfully alive with possibilities. "*The Lord God formed Man out of dirt from the ground & blew into his nostrils the breath of life. The Man came alive - a living soul!*"

You & I are created in God's image, assigned by God to take care of this living creation which God has brought into being. We are positive change-agents, in the mist of chaos, *creating* the future. That matches the New Testament witness to the God of new beginnings. Jesus ushers in the kingdom of God through his life, death & resurrection, so that, "*anyone united with the Messiah gets a fresh start, is created new. The old life is gone; a new life emerges!*" United with the God of darkness & chaos & endings & (Good Friday) and the God of light & order & new beginnings (Easter

Sunday).

The Parish of the Upper Wreake has been on a roadmap to recovery through the whole pandemic, offering life & health in periods of difficulty. 'Shaped by God', we have worked as churches together to **nurture prayer** through online worship; DVD resources; Bible- & Prayer- & Lent-Courses; phone services; weekly Newsletters; Greenhouse gatherings; individual encounters. We have initiated **faith-conversations** through church-yard activities; Festival events; Brooksby College partnership; Wedding couple preparation; messages & gifts to our villages. And we have **lovingly served** our communities through mutual-aid groups; food-boxes in churches; listening to others' needs; registering as an Inclusive Church; celebrating our primary school Staff; marrying Wedding couples; installing toilets!

Chaos is part & parcel of life, but VUCA can be framed more positively. Volatility leads to VISION. Uncertainty yields to UNDERSTANDING. Complexity yields to CLARITY. Ambiguity leads to AGILITY. I don't pretend I've mastered this reframing myself; perhaps like me you resonate with the swan metaphor – aspects of calm, control & grace while under the waterline the manic paddling! Yet by loving one another & pulling together, God has enabled us not simply to survive COVID-19 but to thrive. Mourning what we've lost and embracing the new that is emerging.

Can we name, with gratitude, our Churchwardens who have met & prayed & acted & reflected & lamented & rejoiced: Malcolm & Jeanne; Simon & Pru; Vic & Maureen; Jane; Sue & Lesley. Thanks too to our Church Council members, not least the irrepressible Sheila Taylor. Thanks further to those we partner with, both individuals & organisations: Janet & John & Jonathan engineering Zoom & its DVD ministry; Nancy plus the Creatives in Frisby; the Roof Resurrectors in Kirby; the Friends of Rotherby; new Christian neighbours in Ragdale; Brooksby College & Hall; and of course, the various Trusts and the WI in Hoby, animated by Nicola Wheeler. Our final thanks to Nicola for succeeding Maureen as Hoby Churchwarden, ushering in a new era.

We must also name, with gratitude, Crystal's divine outlook & energy which helps us to dream and to do. Which I find both exhilarating and costly because, as Richard Rohr says; "Prophets teach us how to let go and let things fall apart..." Thankfully, his words end; "...without fear"! Are we willing to sit with chaos, while trusting in new beginnings? Prophets are lovers of spiritual freedom who keep humanity free for God and God free for humanity. Crystal models this in abundance through her deep faith, her clear communication, her easy collaboration & her generous encouragement.

The God of origins, of beginnings (Genesis) promises to make "everything new" as the old order of tears & crying gives way to a new order. So we pray daily, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" believing that this new order, new reality is already ours in Jesus. Following in his footsteps and in his power, disciples are those who learn to be a place in the world where the act of God can come alive. Which is why in this Easter season, we begin to reshape our worshipping life together by listening carefully – to our communities, to one another, and to God. Asking how the sacrament of the Eucharist can be both central & accessible. Building on our growing relationships with families with children. Increasing our use of the outdoors for activities and conversations. Asking for feedback from the Wedding couples we engage with. Developing faith-conversations that have arisen from recent gifts & messages. Reaching out to new communities in Frisby & Brooksby. Offering channels by which people may voice their questions; their hopes; their fears. Above all, spurring one another on in love & prayer.

I look forward to going deeper with you into the mysteries of God's love; and to extending that love to others as we are filled with his Spirit of holiness. Through Inclusive Church. Through Eco Church. Through Living in Love & Faith. Chaos isn't comfortable. New birth isn't straightforward. But as one Easter blessing puts it; *"With the power that raised Jesus from the dead at work within you, go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Alleluia, alleluia. / In the name of Christ. Amen. Alleluia, alleluia."*

Rev David Harknett

2.0 South West Framland Group Council

2020 started off as quite a normal new year, but it wasn't long before our news waves heard about what was happening in Wuhan in China and on January 11th the first death was recorded and attributed to this new virus. By the beginning of March this virus had a name, COVID-19 and on March 24th cases of COVID-19 had affected our health system so much that the NHS was on the verge of collapse and the government took the UK into the first lockdown, which lasted to the start of July. During this time our churches were ordered to close. As restrictions were relaxed worship in person could return and this happened at Ashby Folville (and later others in SWF) and was welcomed by many who felt safe to attend these services which followed the new guidance relating to social distancing and hand sanitising and wearing masks. As autumn arrived it was clear that cases were increasing again and the new Tier system was suspended as we went into lockdown 2 during November. Worship in person was allowed to continue through this time and services took

place in a number of SWF churches although many remained closed throughout 2020.

After lockdown our area was in Tier 3 and after Christmas, we ended the year in Tier 4. Worship in person and churches open for private prayer is still permitted, but who knows what 2021 might bring. The arrival of a vaccine at the end of the year has meant that a return to a more normal way of living is promised and the elderly and vulnerable have started to receive their vaccinations and by December 31st I hope that everyone would at least have heard of someone they know who has had the vaccine or perhaps even had it themselves. We continue to follow the guidance and the great help to the worshipping community has been the provision of online worship. This has allowed the church to continue its work using Zoom, another addition to the English language this year. Being online for those who could master it has been great and this way of supporting each other continues, so that there is now a blend of in person and online worship across SWF which it is hoped is supporting all the congregations and communities in the Group.

We follow the guidance and will continue to do so until there is no need to wear a mask etc anymore. The figure of those who have died of COVID-19 in 2020 (and sadly there will be many more in 2021) was 73,512 people. A staggering number of lives each one representing a story and a tragedy for every family involved. The great concern was that on December 31st the number who died was 964 people. This is almost back to the same levels the country was dealing with in April. There is still much to do. I am sure that the church being in a position to be open for those who need it in person for private prayer as well as being on line needs to focus all their prayer time on continually praying for an end to the pandemic.

The year started with great anticipation as we waited for the licensing of the Revd Jane Walker as the Assistant Priest in the Burrough Hill Parishes. This licensing took place on February 27th at Pickwell by the Bishop of Loughborough the Rt. Revd. Guli Francis-Dehqani. As we know normality for us all suddenly came to an end after that with services suspended and our churches closed. 2020 has not seen a return to normal and we hope 2021 gives us what we long for, a return to a form of normality.

Sadly, during the summer and autumn time Revd Jane was signed off from work, but we are delighted that she is now returning to full health and starting to resume her duties. Revd Neil and Revd David have continued their ministries working hard to keep abreast of the latest guidance with regard to funerals and weddings in particular as well as in person worship. Many weddings were cancelled in 2020 but across the group 5 did take place, but very different for the couples and we very much hope that we as a church have still been able to support them on their special days. Funerals also have been very changed. A funeral in church for a while was not permitted and grave side funerals took place instead. Then followed limits to numbers who can attend, this in itself has changed very much in this country what a funeral is and people have been thinking very differently about what this service is about. The ministry of our Parish priests has adapted to the changes of 2020. We thank them for helping to guide us through so much complexity. On September 27th at 6pm at Leicester Cathedral Revd Crystal McAllister was ordained and started here ministry in the Upper Wreake as the Pioneer Curate as well as her wider ministry across the deanery of Framland. Revd Crystal will be with us for the next five years and we all look forward to working with her. Canon Michael and Canon Malcolm have not been able to take in person services while the pandemic is on, but we have seen them continue their ministry online. This has been much appreciated by those who have received their wise counsel from the online services provided on Zoom.

The payments to SWF to support the central administration and the office changed at the start of 2020 to ensure SWF could continue to run and not to run at a loss. The budget of SWF was reduced and the office now has only 1 member of staff and not 2. In 2020 it seems that the rescue put in place has been successful. The Diocesan fees for 2020 will be paid in 2021 as well as having enough to start paying off the fees owed to the Diocese for 2019.

Due to the pandemic the SWF Group Council did not meet. The standing committee agreed that all officers and representatives to the Group Council would continue in post for another year and that likewise the Safeguarding Policy would remain in place and be updated in 2021. The accounts for 2019 will be presented to the Group Council as soon as Alan Smith our treasurer has had these finalised.

During the pandemic the office has been closed and has operated from the Administrators home. With the advice to stay/work at home if you can this has continued throughout the year and will continue in to 2021. However, the future of Great Dalby Methodist Church is now in question and it is possible that the office will be looking for a new home at some point during 2021.

The SWF Group of villages have been working together for fifteen years now, and in the words of Hebrews 13:8 despite everything we have experienced in 2020 we can be steadfast in our faith

that 'Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever'
Vic Allsop - Chair

3.0 School

Contact with Stuart Northedge, his staff and the pupils became limited as the full impact of the impending pandemic hit home. I was able to take an interest in Stuart's welfare as Head Teacher, and Janet played a supportive role to the school in her capacity as Vice Chair of the Governing Body. However, the late-notice Government directives put huge pressure on practical arrangements, and as a church we simply prayed for our local school. I regret not having the wherewithal to share news & needs more frequently with Churchwardens & the PCC, but Crystal, Janet, Pru, Simon & I were able to show practical love as the year unfolded. YouTube assemblies ensured that we 'appeared' in school virtually, with those home-learning able to access the videos online. This medium enabled us to convey something of God's good news through scripture, teaching, song & prayer. Alongside this, I sought to stand at the school gate on Monday mornings & Friday afternoons to listen & converse. Assemblies gave way to bespoke online acts of worship, marking Festivals such as Harvest, Remembrance & Christmas.

To bring you up to date, our care has been more focussed this year. As well as Janet & I playing our part as Foundation Governors, I speak to Stuart almost weekly on Zoom. I have resourced weekly video assemblies during Lent 2021 on the theme of Pilgrim Pathways, and these have involved Malcolm Britton, Pru Smith, Simon Blake, Eve Harknett & Carys Harknett. A personalised & signed card went to all staff & support staff, containing scripture, poetry & prayer for their refreshment over the Easter break. Crystal, Janet & I meet with Stuart late April to help shape our ministry with & to Frisby Primary.

Rev David Harknett

4.0 Rotherby House Group

A few weeks meeting in house and then the lockdown. Keeping in contact with the group by phone it was obvious we needed to meet somehow. We discovered a Bible Course on line which was attended by zoom, all were invited to join in including all members of the Upper Wreake, the course was written and led by Andrew Ollerton, and he worked through the books of the Bible. We started each session with music from Clive then Andrew talked through each area of the Bible which was followed by a discussion and questions, this really helped us to find our way through the Bible with a greater understanding an eight-week course.

This was followed a few weeks later with the Prayer Course written by Pete Greig some of us bought his book which was excellent taking us through topics such as; adoration, intercession, petition, spiritual warfare, listening and much more, helping us to feel more confident with our prayer life knowing it's just a way of talking to God. We all found this a great way of meeting together sharing our thoughts and concerns.

We then continued to meet on line sharing prayer and different topics and Clive's music.

During Advent we joined with David and the Advent course a series reflecting on 2020 through the Christmas story the Then and Now, how we related the message to our thoughts of 2020 and realizing Jesus' journey was very similar to what we have been though in 2020.

Sue Smith

5.0 Messy Church

Messy Church met in January and February and then we went into lockdown. We met online on zoom which didn't work for the ages and personalities of the children. Summer holidays came and people didn't want to meet. Trails were placed in the church yards which was a success and some relationships have been maintained through personal relationships between the adults and myself, David and Vicky that had become established in the short time in 2019.

Rev Crystal McAllister

6.0 All Saints, Hoby

2020 will be a year we will not forget in a hurry. It started like any other year but by the middle of January the city of Wuhan in China became a familiar name to us as the place where a new virus had been identified. By the middle of March COVID-19 became a new word for us and as the pandemic became more widespread and our hospitals began to fill up with the critically ill, on March 24th the UK went into Lockdown and our lives changed completely for the rest of the year, and no doubt for some time in to 2021.

Within a few days all public buildings if not closed already were closed. This included All Saints'. When the building was closed we did not go in to church again until the start of July. With restrictions being relaxed the parish church prepared to open each day for private prayer, which it did every day from July 22nd. This continued throughout the rest of the year. Although England had

a second lockdown from November 5th to December 2nd the parish church was able to remain open, and continued to be a place of private prayer, contemplation and reflection for the community through these difficult times for everyone.

The life of the church though has continued. Sunday worship has gone online and is shared each week on Zoom. This has been a great way of continuing our weekly worship and being in touch with each other as a church family and as a part of the wider community.

Sadly on June 2nd Simon Cowman died. He was born and had lived in Hoby all his life and had been a dedicated and long serving Churchwarden of Hoby parish church. Although restrictions were still in place on June 24th a short service was able to take place on that day in church before his ashes were buried in the churchyard extension.

We also noted the death of Revd Anthony Wibberley who died on 15th August. He was Rector of Hoby from 1986 to 1990 and was the last Rector to live in Hoby. His successors have since lived in Frisby on the Wreake.

2020 marked the 800th anniversary of the parish church, with written evidence of the appointment of a Vicar for Hoby in 1220. A wide variety of events were planned at Hoby and with her sister churches at Brooksby, Ragdale and Rotherby, also celebrating 800 years. Because of the pandemic sadly none of these events were realised. The commemorative mug though was seen through to conclusion and very popular it has been as well.

This year there have been four services in the Parish Church. February 16th which was the first service since October 2019 when the church closed for the toilet and servery project to start. Then a service on March 15th, which was the last service before the pandemic closed the church. The next service was on December 20th and a Christmas Service followed on December 23rd. Thanks here go to Nicola Wheeler and Jane Ackerley for planning this service and ensuring that the village came together before Christmas. All other services have continued online and continue to be online while restrictions remain in place, although now we are having in person services of Holy Communion as well.

During these times of constant change we thank our Priest in Charge Revd David Harknett for the support and care given to us all in Hoby. We also appreciate greatly the support of our new Curate Revd Crystal McAllister who has worked so hard with the Upper Wreake community using her Pioneering skills to help us keep in touch with our villages during the pandemic Canon Malcolm Britton continues to give us his wise counsel, and his support is greatly appreciated.

With Revd Crystal McAllister's support the work of outreach to children emerged as one of the triumphs of the year. An alternative Halloween event was planned, still with pumpkins, but these had happy faces! All the children and their parents came to church on October 31st for what was an afternoon valued by everyone. At Advent all the children were provided with an advent candle, card and sweets as they prepared for a different Christmas. This year as well the parish church sent a Christmas card and pastoral letter to each home in Hoby, offering a message of hope to everyone. Church life continued, but outside the building and not in it. The Easter garden was on the door step of the south door and the tenor bell rang each week in solidarity with the community when for ten weeks we clapped on our doorsteps in support of the NHS. The outreach also continues, as soon as we could we restarted supporting the Foodbank in Melton. The support for this over the last few months from Hoby has been outstanding.

Although our close relationship with the Methodist Church has been affected by the pandemic with regard to what we do together in person, we work very closely together and have done so continuously throughout the year online with the Zoom services.

The Bats in Churches project was affected by the pandemic in 2020 and will resume again in 2021.

The Church Log Book and Church Terrier require updating and this will be done in the first part of 2021 before the Annual District Church Meeting.

Projects and maintenance carried out at church in 2020.

- The Toilet and Servery project was finally completed when the water supply was connected on March 18th. Sadly the facilities have not been used fully in 2020 because of the pandemic but they are ready and waiting! The practical completion report was finished in October so now all the paper work for this project has been done. One task remains and that is to open an account with Severn Trent. This will be done in the new year.
- Much work was carried out to the wood work in the church. The 15th century pews were repaired. Repair to the parquet floor was carried out. Woodwork around the high altar was repaired as were church doors and cupboards and a number of small jobs such as repair to the alms box etc. This has greatly improved the church.

- A new cross to celebrate 800 years of the parish church has been made from wood from the church and this will at some point be dedicated to the memory of Simon Cowman in 2021.
- Improvements to the guttering over the south door took place in the autumn and repairs to splits on the nave roof were carried out. (Unfortunately we still have a leak which needs resolving on that roof). A leak on the north aisle roof is linked to the west gable end and the stone work is most likely to be attended to in 2021
- A new strip light has been put in to the vestry and four tubes have been replaced in the quartz ray heaters in the south aisle
- The four lime trees in the church yard were pollarded just before Christmas, with thanks to a generous benefactor.
- The north aisle was reordered to create more social space. This has involved the removal from church of a number of pews, including the two fixed pews at the west end of the nave. This makes the church look more spacious and will be helpful for after church services and for village events and concerts etc.
- At the beginning of December, the church was contract cleaned with a generous grant from Natural England. This came from our participation in the Bats in churches project. By the middle of December, the building was looking great again and very ready for whatever we might be able to provide by way of a Christmas service.
- The church was fully decorated for Christmas in 2020 for the first time since 2018 and this year we were pleased to benefit from the donation of an outdoor Christmas tree which was put up by the village and also decorated by the community.
- The DCC agreed that we should have an annual church maintenance inspection starting in 2021. This will be carried out each autumn and will involve clearing and repairing the gutters of the church and inspection of the drains. Also an inspection of the church roof, with repairs to splits to stop, prevent and repair water leaks. Associated stonework will also be included in that inspection.
- After three years, The Arts Society, Church Recording Project concluded. A significant volume catalogued everything of the church's interior. The volume was handed over by Ann Lewis of The Arts Society in the autumn to the churchwardens. We must take this opportunity here to also thank Sue Croft, as she participated in this project and was involved in the compilation of the woodwork section of the volume.

Projects and maintenance on hold:

- Replacement of some of our church linen.
- The search for a new burial ground. (Some progress has been made in 2020 and an option with Leicester Diocese is being followed up.)
- Repairs to vulnerable parts of our boundary walls (Churchyard and Churchyard Extension).
- Maintenance to the church yard path way and the church yard pillars and gates.
- Creating a strategy for stonework repairs.
- Church heating project
- Reviewing of our risk assessments.
- Assessing the condition of our church electrics and looking at a sound system.

Finance of the Parish Church.

In 2020 we had one fund raising event which was in January to celebrate the start of the 800th anniversary year of the church. This event held at the home of Nicola Wheeler raised £230 and was used in part to pay towards the costs of producing the 800th anniversary mugs. These have sold well in 2020 and have produced a small additional income during the year. The amount raised will be known in 2021.

We were also pleased to receive sponsor money from four cyclists/walkers who took part in the 2020 Ride + Stride event. This support was greatly appreciated.

With no other income from fund raising in 2020 and with the cancellation of Open Gardens the church has lost income in excess of £11,000 this year. Putting this alongside a year of high expenditure the finances of the church have reduced significantly in 2020 and seem likely to reduce further in 2021 if the pandemic continues well into next year.

Despite the drop in income during the year, the church has felt able to keep its gift to the diocese for 2021 the same as it was in 2020. The gift in 2021 will be £3,000

Hoby DCC want to take this opportunity to thank again The Friends of Hoby Church for their tremendous fundraising, and also those who gave grants in support of the toilet and servery project. Without this support we could not have completed this project. We received grants from:

- The Diocese of Leicester – Capital Fund
- Hoby with Rotherby Parish Council – Quintas Community Fund
- Tarmac
- Leicestershire Historic Churches Trust
- The Jack Patston Trust
- Maude Elkington Trust
- Florence Turner Trust
- Listed Places of Worship for the recovery of VAT for this project.

□ Fundraising by The Friends of Hoby Church and Hoby DCC

During 2021 Hoby Church hopes to resume its quest to become an Eco Church. We also hope to work with the Parish Council as it works on producing a plan for the Civil Parish to address the climate change emergency.

Maureen and Vic are continually moved by the kindness shown by so many towards the parish church, and particularly so during this year of the pandemic when support has been even greater than usual. We pray that the experience of 2020 will give us the ability to continue God's work here in Hoby in 2021 and beyond, with and for the people of this community. Without your support, help and encouragement we could not do this work.

We very much look forward to 2021 as a new year offers a vaccine to combat the pandemic and this brings the promise of better times. The piece of scripture adopted for the 800th anniversary speaks of the hope that is freely offered to us all by our Lord and Saviour and as we lament for those we have lost in 2020 we should also look forward to a brighter tomorrow for us all.

'Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever' Hebrews 13:8

Maureen Coleman and Vic Allsop (Churchwardens)

7.0 All Saints, Ragdale Mission and Ministry

What a different and difficult year this has been. There have been so few services held at All Saints Church this year due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. Following the release of the first national lockdown in July we were able to ensure that the church was safely available for private prayer at weekends until October and since then it has remained available by prior notice. We were able to resume holding in church Communion services at 8.30am on alternate Sundays on 4th October but unfortunately this had to cease when the 2nd national lockdown restrictions came into law in early November.

The church was open on November 8th, Remembrance Sunday, for prayers of loving remembrance, with Revd Crystal praying during the afternoon and a few village residents visiting to light candles and pray for loved ones. The church was decorated for Christmas and opened for private prayer on December 20 for Blue Christmas. People were again invited to light a candle for loved ones and to hang prayer requests on the tree for people and events close to their hearts.

We were unable to hold the annual Carol Service in church this year. However, the village community embraced the Christmas season by lighting their houses and a large Christmas tree was kindly erected by Mark and David at Home Farm on their drive. Mark McMorran and Louis Caver organised community carol singing around the tree. This was well attended by villagers standing socially distanced and included lovely solos from Ilea Caver and Emilia Bond, Revd David concluded with a blessing.

It was possible to hold Midnight Communion at Ragdale on 24th December, this was a very beautiful but socially distanced event with 11 people present and a wonderful clarinet solo performed by Mr Power to close the service.

There were no weddings, baptisms or funerals held in Ragdale during the year. It was with sadness that two elderly residents, Betty Jones and her twin sister Joan Roe, had to leave the village and independent living to live in a care home. Betty and Joan were members of the Church in the village and over many years had provided the after-service refreshments at All Saints Church. They will be sadly missed.

As previously anticipated the role of DCC Treasurer became vacant at the ADCM meeting in March and there were no volunteers to fill this role. Unfortunately, the reasons for the previous Treasurers resignation led to three further members resigning from the DCC. This is a great disappointment to the remaining members, the whole DCC had been working well together for the benefit of the village and Church. The accounts are currently in the control of the Churchwarden but this is not a situation which can continue.

Fabric of Church Building

There has been very little maintenance to the church building during 2020. The gutters and drains were kindly organised as a donation by a church member. There is now maintenance needed to the bells, two of which are sticking. Also, some of the woodwork needs to be investigated and treated.

Fundraising and Social Events

There have been no social activities this year and we have been unable to hold any fundraising events.

Jane Burgess, Churchwarden

8.0 St. Peter's, Kirby Bellars

The common thread of the Covid-19 restrictions ran through the life of St. Peter's Church during 2020 plus the continuing concern about the state of the building added to the challenges. Only 2 services were held in January and February plus a Christmas celebration in December.

Church Fabric

We are very grateful to the roof resurrectors for their continuing support and practical work recorded in their report. David Davies kindly made all the arrangements for the quinquennial inspection and has been instrumental in applying for grants which have facilitated some of the necessary work prior to the replacement of the roof.

Testing of the fire-extinguishers, electrical appliances and gravestones was carried out.

People

It was with great sadness that we heard of the death of David Woodward in May. David had faithfully worshipped at the church for many years until recently, had held the office of churchwarden for many years and in his younger days could often be found up a ladder cleaning the gutters or carrying some other maintenance work in the church or churchyard. Until very recently he had regularly grown plants for sale in aid of the church during the art exhibition weekend. After a lifetime's involvement with St. Peter's, his funeral could not be held in the building. All we could do as a mark of respect was to chime the tenor bell as the hearse carrying his body processed through the village and paused at the church gates on its way to the crematorium.

Malcolm Britton

8.1 Kirby Roof Resurrectors

The group began the year in high spirits hoping for a packed programme of fund-raising events. Then something happened.....

- Before the year of 2020 froze up socially in March, The Resurrectors managed to lay on two successful events:
- The January Church Walk was attended by approximately 40 people. They enjoyed a pleasant and informative stroll which was followed by refreshments. Perhaps this event could be repeated in future. £200 was raised for the Church roof with a further £100 in lieu of food donations.
- The Curry Night in the village hall was squeezed in just before lockdown. There was a much `shall we Shan't we` beforehand but we were very pleased we went ahead with this gathering. Around 80 people enjoyed a fun evening and a decent meal from the Asfordby Curry House. This could definitely be held again given the positive feedback. £592.50 was raised through a combination of ticket sales and a raffle.
- We held a couple of working weekends in July to give the church a thorough clean inside - cobwebs and windows and carpets and things. At the same time, another gang focused on the church yard in particular the roof water drains. We are pleased to report that a little gully clearance, rodding and a fresh connection has allowed all the rain water to run away unimpeded.
- There was a further maintenance session in October to keep ahead of the damp before winter. The red carpet runner was cleaned and lifted to air. The kneelers were relocated to safe and dry area as were the chairs and anything else we felt was vulnerable.
- December 18th saw the socially distanced Carol service bring a little Christmas cheer. Rev. David led a quiet service inside with contributions from various members of the congregation before we retired outside for a brief sing song in accordance with the law. Unfortunately, we were not allowed to serve any refreshments.
- Looking forward to the rest of 2021, we hope as Government guidance allows us, we can resume our fund-raising activities. There should certainly be an appetite within the village to get out and about and we hope to capitalise on this. *Richard Machin*

9.0 St Michael & All Angels Church, Brooksby

General

The various restrictions imposed during the Covid-19 pandemic limited much of the church's usual activity from March 19th onwards. This was particularly disappointing as it would have been a busy year celebrating the church's "800th birthday" with the opportunity of increased fund-raising.

Brooksby Melton College became part of the SMB Group having merged with Stephenson's College, Coalville at the beginning of February 2020.

The Spinney Campus has subsequently been sold and building on the new housing development for 70 houses is likely to commence in 2021 with some occupancy in 2022. The Parish Council is preparing plans to welcome the newcomers with a welcome pack financed by the developer. The PCC and DCC will be planning ways of engaging with the residents.

The college and associated commercial ventures continued to suffer through the Covid-19 restrictions and redundancies were made.

Worship, Mission and Ministry

The church remained open during weekends (and at other times by arrangement).

David and Crystal met with Lisa Craddock (Vice Principal - Business Development) and Lorraine Cox (Student Services Manager). Crystal will be supporting Brooksby and Melton campuses on workshops around wellbeing and mental health for students and staff with a possibility of establishing peer mentoring as support for students.

Jeanne delivered home-baked biscuits with Christmas good wishes to all the residents of Brooksby on behalf of St Michael's Church. This gesture was very warmly received.

Despite the rapidly changing situation, three couples managed to tie the knot in Brooksby Church towards the end of the year and there was one marriage blessing. (There could have been as many as 18 weddings in 2021 but some have been rescheduled already.)

A celebration service for the life of Shelley Richards, whose sister lives at Brooksby Grange, was held in September.

Prior to the lockdown there were two 8.30am holy communion services in the church.

The annual lambing service was held at Hall Farm, by permission of the principal and with the collaboration of the new farms and estate manager, James Fryer. This was the last service of worship in Brooksby prior to the lockdown. The collection of £133.50 was donated to Birmingham Children's Hospital where James and Anna Fryer's daughter, Olivia, was due to have an operation.

Parish services by Zoom and the CDs produced were popularly received, not only by regular church attenders but by others in other parishes and the Methodist circuit who would not normally be able to attend. We are grateful to John and Jonathan Norburn for enabling part of the Remembrance Sunday service to be recorded in Brooksby Church.

Fabric and related topics

Work on the building was inevitably limited during the year and the routine fire-extinguisher test had to be delayed. Work carried out included

receiving an ornate stand for the alms dish fabricated by Alan Odom

fixing loose slates on the roof and cleared the gutters and downpipes

carrying out the lightning conductor test

PAT testing

checking the safety of the gravestones

re - fixing the slate headstones which had become unsafe, to the south wall of the church

regular weekly checking of the building and surrounds

Derek Oldfield continued throughout the year to keep the churchyard in good order by mowing, removing moss from the path, clearing the gullies around the base of the church and other maintenance jobs. This necessitated making arrangements with the college for him to gain vehicular access on each occasion when the college was closed.

The Church Log Book is up-to-date.

There are three ongoing projects for which funding is being sought:

restoration of the bell (faculty obtained)

the fixing of louvres in the lucarnes of the spire to prevent the ingress of rain and subsequent damage to the wooden floors within the tower (faculty obtained)

extensive stonework repairs (specification and schedule of works completed)

Fund-raising

A splendid sum of £1,000 was raised during the year by selling Brooksby Church tea-towels, a quiz, and the Ride-and-Stride. Great credit is due to Jeanne without whom none of this would have happened. No talks to groups or visits could be held.

Apart from £250 raised for the Leicestershire Historic Churches Fund, the DCC donated £100 to the Leicestershire Live There With You Fund and £250 to One Roof Leicester.

People

Thanks are due to

- Dawn Whitmore, Lisa Craddock, Lorraine Cox, James Fryer and other staff members of the SMB Group for their help and co-operation during a particularly difficult year
- Derek Oldfield for taking a pride in maintaining the churchyard
- Alan Odom for placing his practical skills at the church's disposal
- Vic Allsop for unravelling the consequences of Covid-19 on Brooksby weddings
- Rev David Harknett and Rev Crystal McAllister for their oversight and increasing involvement with Brooksby Melton College students and staff.

Malcolm Britton and Jeanne Knowles (Churchwardens)

10.0 All Saints, Rotherby

The year started very bleak, everywhere was very wet after months of rain, we were unable to enjoy our winter walk, although we did meet to enjoy our soup in Church which raised £86-.

The New Year brought news of the Coronavirus and March 23rd a total lockdown. Our Churches closed without any income and all fund raising cancelled, including our 800th celebrations of the Bishop of Lincoln visiting the Parishes

Watts app groups are set up in all the villages including one for Church Wardens, a way to keep in

touch and to share information on our phones and before long we are all learning to zoom to share Church Services through the South West Framland. As well as zooming the services were recorded and delivered to those who were unable to join on line via a DVD.

As the weather improves Serena a DCC member started a book swap stall, also selling jams and marmalade once a week. More ideas, we would produce a cookery book in the village all residents sending in their favourite food recipes and it being inscribed by the chief cook from Buckingham Palace, all to raise funds for our Church, all this combined made £4000- towards the Church kitchen an amazing amount.

The only visitors we had in Church through the first lockdown were the jackdaws who made a terrible mess once we located where they were coming in it was blocked and the Church cleaned.

After the first lockdown we opened our Church for private prayer, and it is still open on Wednesdays and Saturdays, with all procedures, spacing and hand cleaning stations in place, all soft furnishings and books removed in case of infection.

In September after many years of planning and fundraising the toilet was fitted in the base of the tower, it will make such a difference when we are able to hold services again and socials. The pews have been removed from what will be the meeting area and we have a quote for this work hopefully this will happen this spring – summer.

We have had one communion service in Church in between lockdowns and one burial.

Moving to autumn we celebrated All Souls with the villages, the children were given pumpkins to decorate and bring them to Church with Happy Smiley faces and exchange them for a Christian goody bag.

In December we held a funding program in the village asking villagers to support the Church by regular giving or a one-off donation, despite social restriction we were able to do this and we are very grateful to everyone for their support.

Christmas arrives and we lit up the Church and had a grand switch on in the village which was much appreciated and we decorated the inside of the Church with our crib etc. The Christmas season being very different this year with no Carol Services a very quiet time, though we are very blessed in our village that no one was taken with the virus and everyone is safe. *Sue Smith & Lesley Potter (Churchwardens)*

11.0 St Thomas of Canterbury, Frisby on the Wreake

Mission & Ministry

2020 has been an “interesting” year in Frisby! Although lockdown eventually prevented us gathering together for the Wednesday morning 9.15a.m. Communion services we supplanted it with our “Phone” Communion rota whereby 5 members of the church read a short Communion service to 7 other members of Frisby church who bring along their own “bread & wine”. Under the stewardship of Malcolm Britton these have been an enormous success and are very simple indeed to administer & to participate in: just a 10 min phone call which then allows for a (usually) much longer chat afterwards.

The DCC decided that Private Prayer should go ahead on Wednesdays and Saturdays of each week when the church is unlocked & those who wish can come in, sanitise, record their contact details, take a seating card & use the Lady Chapel for prayer. I know this has been appreciated by a number of people. The church is then cleaned at the end of the day but also left for over 72 hours before the next opening.

We have had 2 funerals during lockdown that of Debbie Bird’s father and Mike Smith. Organisation for these was made very much easier by the Churchwardens having a list of participants prior to the event and thus being able to organise a personal seating plan. Strict regulations of social distancing, the wearing of masks and little or no socialising in the church were observed. Both events were much appreciated by those in attendance.

Before the Dec lockdown there were several “events” at the Church including the Holy Halloween complete with numerous pumpkins overseen by Crystal McAllister and the Loving Remembrance private prayer overseen by Janet Norburn. Christingle was a particular highlight as there were effectively 3 half hour services on a rotational basis, the first 2 of which were “sold out”. As numbers had to be limited Jo Hings & husband Sean Wixey helped put together a list of those who would be attending. People came dressed for the occasion as the services took place mostly outside with the crib in the church doorway. It was then moved into the body of the church for candles to be lit and “Away in a Manger”. On the back of these services our usual donation, although smaller, to the Children’s Society could take place.

We must not forget the Zoom services every Sunday at 10.30a.m. which again have been very successful with congregations regularly in excess of 35. This has taken an enormous amount of organisation both by David, Crystal and by the Norburn family providing not only technical expertise during the service but recording, music and DVD distribution to a wider congregation largely who do not have computers.

Thus 2020 has not been a year to forget and we have made best use of limited circumstances.

Report on the fabric of the church building and related topics

The Baptistry roof had been leaking very badly during the winter of 2019/2020 and it was not possible to jeopardise the roof timbers, Baptistery floor & wall panelling any longer. This was now

an emergency and so all attention was diverted to getting plans drawn up to replace it with Terne Coated Stainless Steel (TCSS) and putting on hold all plans for the Toilet & Served. Eventually a TCSS roof was approved by the Chancellor & we obtained a Faculty. It was then necessary to divert some grants obtained for the Toilet & Served project into the Roof project in order that this could be done during 2021. In Dec we were told by Historic England that we had been successful in obtaining a substantial grant which would cover 95% of the costs of the project. We hope that after the bat hibernation season we will be starting work (early April).

The grant has enabled the DCC to concentrate on the Toilet & Served project which is basically ready to go except for the funding. With luck and grant aiding we hope to begin work on this later in the year.

In November we were told by Trinitas, our insurance company, that it was now incumbent on us to obtain a roof alarm in order that they could insure us going forward. Otherwise, our premium would more than double. However, it became clear that the maximum insurance they were prepared to offer on our roofs was only £50k. This would not cover the costs of lead replacement of the roofs and barely covered replacement of the roofs using TCSS. It was time to find another insurance company which was prepared to cover the roofs fully. Ecclesiastical was an option but they also required us to obtain a roof alarm. Thus it was no longer an option and a search for reasonably priced alarms (the installation of which the company had to approve) was soon conducted. Just before Christmas we learned that we had been successful in obtaining a grant which would very nearly cover the costs of its purchase.

Fund-raising /Social Activities

No fund-raising activities such as concerts, fetes and art exhibitions have been possible during this Covid year. However, on 12th Sept Leics Historic Churches Trust (LHCT) did organise their usual Ride & Stride. This year, with encouragement from David and the fact that it was an out of doors activity, we strongly exhorted all villages in the Upper Wreake parish to take part in order to raise funds for their churches. Walking & cycling routes were mapped out for people who had not participated before and there was even a group who cycled to Bottesford and back: well over 100Km. The majority of participants were from Frisby and Hoby and the weather made it an extremely enjoyable day: it was certainly as social as it could be. There was a great deal more interest in the Ride & Stride than LHCT had seen in previous years and thus a lot more money raised than before. However, it must be said that overall and unsurprisingly 2020 has been a very lean year indeed for fund raising and social activities.

The Future and 2021

At the time of writing the installation of the roof alarm has taken place (Feb 17th and 18th) and, as stated above we're looking forward to the baptistery roof completion early April. It would be beneficial to the DCC to complete the Toilet & Served project before October 2021 because then permission to extend the faculty beyond its 2-year limit would not have to take place. 2021 could be year of great change both internally and externally to St Thomas Church.
Simon Blake & Pru Smith (Churchwardens)

12.0 Bellringers

The Framland Society held their Monthly meeting at Hoby in February and that turned out to be the only ringing of Tower bells at either Hoby, or Kirby this year *. This was due to the restrictions imposed on social gatherings and closure of the Churches, amongst many other premises, in order to reduce the spread of the Coronavirus Covid-19 pandemic.

* The only brief exception to the above occurred at Kirby Church in May, when a bell was tolled in memory of and in respect for the late David Woodward, as the hearse bearing his coffin paused at the Church gates. David had been a lifelong supporter of Kirby Church and he had been a Churchwarden for many years.

The Handbell ringers met at Kirby Church weekly between January and mid-March, when the above-mentioned restrictions were imposed by the government.

Martin Paling (Tower Captain)

13.0 Deanery Synod

The Synod met 4 times since the last APCM on the theme of "The Church and..."

Thursday 5th March - Old Dalby Village Hall - **"The Church and Inclusivity"** Rev Lusa Nsenga-Ngoy, the Diocese BAME Mission and Ministry Enabler

Other meetings were held on Zoom

Wednesday 17th June - **"The Church and Climate Change"** - Dr. Stuart Evans, lead member of the Deanery Church Heating Project.

Thursday 24th September - **"The Church and Other Faiths"** - Break out rooms with representatives of faith communities in Leicester

Wednesday 2nd December - **"The Church and Other Ministers"** - Christmas Reflections led by Deanery Pioneer Ministers

The Rev Canon John Barr succeeded Rev Canon Dr Peter Hooper as Area Dean on the latter's appointment as Archdeacon of France.
 Mike Alexander succeeded Malcolm Britton as Lay Chair
 Rev David Cowie succeeded Roger Tucker as Secretary
 Canon Judith Wells remains as Treasurer

14.0 Safeguarding

- 1) Name of Parish Safeguarding Coordinator (PSO)
 Mrs Janet Norburn (DBS Verifier)
- 2) Other people with an SG Leadership Role
 Rev'd David Harknett (Priest in Charge)
 Canon Vic Allsop (Safeguarding Admin / Asst. DBS Verifier & Record-keeper)
- 3) Adoption by the PCC of recent National or Diocesan Policies *
 The Leicester diocese has decided to use the National Church safeguarding website resources & templates. Links have been circulated to Clergy & Churchwardens, inc.
 ~ National CofE Safeguarding Page: 'Templates & Resources'
<https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/policy-and-practice-guidance/templates-and-resources>
 ~ Parish Safeguarding Handbook (Aug 2019)
<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-10/ParishSafeGuardingHandBookAugust2019Web.pdf>
- 4) Key Points of our Action Plan **
 - a) SWF Policy & Checklist
 - => Policy to be reviewed in line with the National Church guidelines.
 - => Policy & Checklist to be brought to SWF AGM by Janet Norburn (May 2021)
 - => Policy & Checklist to be adopted by the Upper Wreake PCC (Thu 20th May '21)
 - b) Training ...
 - => PSO & Clergy to meet & review SWF practice & Action Plan (late April/ early May)
 - => Safer Recruiting Training to be initiated, with training led by the Diocese when material has been finalised by the National Safeguarding Team.
- 5) Safeguarding issues
 No new safeguarding issues raised. Some monitoring continues to be carried out across SWF.
 * typically, by using the suggested Model Policy

Financial Report

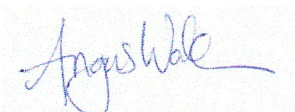
The Parish of the Upper Wreake Consolidated Accounts Receipts and Payments for the Year ended 31 December 2020 and the Statement of Assets at 31 December 2020

	DCC						Sub-Total DCC	PCC	Total	2019
	Brooksby	Frisby	Hoby	Kirby	Ragdale	Rotherby				
Receipts										
Fund Raising	983	15,487	1,047	929			18,445		18,445	10,153
Wedding and Funeral Fees	852	476	769	830		91	3,018	20	3,038	4,418
Donations	1,323	41	817	1,546	2,500		6,227		6,227	12,060
Collections	288	1,174	226	229	274	10	2,201		2,201	6,708
Sundry	649		254		2,311	86	3,300		3,300	1,426
Grants	0	17,348	1,100	18,750	0	35,916	73,114		73,114	34,456
VAT	0		8,008				8,008		8,008	7,335
Interest	109	80	32	92	2	0	314		314	218
Planned Giving	1,190	10,418	7,816	2,868	3,190	2,036	27,518		27,518	23,088
Income Tax Recovered	690		2,345		2,263	1,898	7,196		7,196	3,681
Donated Collections	0		257				257		257	202
Total Receipts	6,083	45,024	22,671	25,243	10,540	40,037	149,597	20	149,617	103,745
Payments										
Parish Share to Diocese	1,416	6,500	3,120	525	1,570	2,112	15,243		15,243	15,148
SWF Cluster Contribution	244	1,772	888	1,345	436	432	5,117		5,117	4,628
Organ Tuning and Repairs			210		152		362		362	842
Power, Rates etc	584	535	210	1,270	394	860	3,852		3,852	6,825
Fees paid	250		0	0	0	120	370		370	1,386
Donations etc	350	131	200		276	1,440	2,397	20	2,417	3,093
Church Insurance Premium	1,921	2,745	3,473	3,265	1,170	1,704	14,277		14,277	14,171
Maintenance Church yard	584	612	827	820		645	3,488		3,488	3,092
Sundry	643	218	2,316	0	113	326	3,616		3,616	3,934
Maintenance	147	0		597			744		744	2,453
Building Repairs/Alarms	0	0	12,110	0	527		12,637		12,637	2,289
Major Building Works	0		16,890			31,643	48,533		48,533	61,674
Professional Fees		3,642	0	510	98	3,086	7,336		7,336	12,077
Total Payments	6,139	16,155	40,244	8,331	4,736	42,367	117,972	20	117,992	131,611
Movement in Funds	(56)	28,869	(17,573)	16,912	5,804	(2,331)	31,625	0	31,625	(27,866)
Balance at start of year	14,372	22,749	54,386	26,219	2,525	15,698	135,950	10	135,960	163,826
Statement of Assets at 31 December 2020	14,316	51,618	36,813	43,131	8,329	13,368	167,575	10	167,585	135,960
Balance carried forward; all held in High Street Bank Current or Deposit Accounts										

Vic Allsop
Treasurer and Trustee

Independent Examiner's Report

- The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts, as presented on the following page. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) or the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 and that an independent examination is needed.
- It is my responsibility to:
 - examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
 - to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
 - to state whether particular matters have come to my attention
- My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.
- In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention
 - which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
 - To prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act have not been met; or
 - to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Angus Walker FCA [Retired]
Square House 2 Regent Road Hoby Leicestershire LE14 3DU

Date 1 March 2021