

Parish Profile 2017

St. Philip & St. James Churches

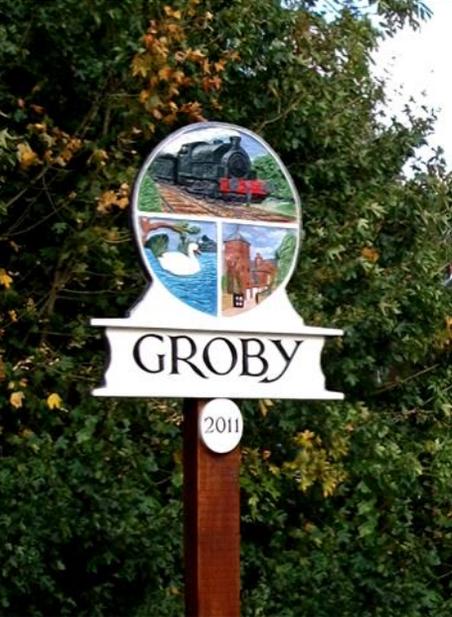


Groby & Ratby Benefice Leicestershire



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND





Introduction

Thank you for taking an interest in the Benefice of Groby and Ratby. The following profile sets out the key information for prospective candidates for the position of Rector. The benefice will be headed by the new incumbent who will have spiritual and pastoral responsibility for St. Philip & St. James Church, Groby, and for St. Philip & St. James Church, Ratby.

Our hope is that, as you read, you will appreciate who we are as God’s people. We are friendly and welcoming churches who are actively engaged with our local communities. We look to God to provide the person who will lead us on the next step of our journey.

We hope you will find this profile of interest to you; please contact us if you would like any further information.

Groby and Ratby in Brief

The adjacent villages of Groby and Ratby are situated a few miles north west of Leicester on the edge of the new National Forest and are close to the M1 and M69 motorways. Both are within easy reach of East Midlands Airport.

Groby and Ratby are two established villages just outside the City with populations of about 7000 and 4500 respectively. They are thriving communities with local small businesses and some light industry. The majority of people in both villages are long term residents. New residents notably young families, are arriving in significant numbers, attracted by the development of new homes, convenient location, good schools and the surrounding countryside.

Both villages benefit from their own areas of woodland and a network of footpaths that link them to other villages and the countryside beyond. The facilities within the villages include Post Offices, Building Societies, shops, pubs and takeaways. The fact that both villages still have a library is testament to the quality of the communities themselves. Each library was recently taken over by a group of local volunteers. There are also many active organisations catering for different sections of the populations.

Across the villages there are Rainbows, Brownies, Girl Guides, Girls’ Brigade, Beavers, Cubs and Scout groups who have links with the churches which could be strengthened further.

As well as four primary schools, there are several pre-school providers in the villages. The secondary school, which is organised into a high school (11-14 years) and a community college (14-18 years), is situated on the edge of Groby and caters for young people from Groby, Ratby and the surrounding area.



St. Philip & St. James, Groby

The church was built in 1840 by the Earl of Stamford owing to the distance to Ratby church from his home in Bradgate House.

St. Philip & St. James, Ratby

Built in four stages from the 13th through 15th centuries and restored by Nicholas Joyce in 1881.



Introduction to the Parishes

The Benefice of Groby and Ratby is made up of the parishes of Groby and Ratby, each with a parish church. It is in the Diocese of Leicester, the Archdeaconry of Loughborough and the deanery of Sparkenhoe East, which has recently undergone significant reorganisation in anticipation of the diocesan 2020 vision. Thus Groby and Ratby now form a close working group alongside the nearby parishes of Desford and Kirby Muxloe; this is known as the Ivanhoe Group. The whole deanery is a Mission Partnership of 15 churches with the purpose of encouraging and resourcing local mission and outreach, working jointly with local ecumenical partners. Both churches have good relationships with the schools and other village organisations. In Ratby there are good links with the Ratby Band, and Newtown Linford Choral Society who use the church for concerts.

The Benefice office is situated at the Church Rooms in Ratby where a part time Parish Administrator books and administers funerals, weddings and baptisms along with other general support duties.

We currently have a NSM curate, a Reader, Pastoral Assistant, two Youth Workers (one tbc) and a Children's and Families Worker, offering a mixture of full, part time and voluntary ministry. Both churches make a Parish share gift each year.



The Rectory, Ratby

An inviting eco-friendly modern home.



Tug of War, Groby

All pulling together as one.



The Rectory

The large modern rectory house is situated at 23 Ferndale Drive, Ratby LE6 0LH in the heart of the village. It has 4 bedrooms, one with an en-suite bathroom, family bathroom, lounge, dining room, large fitted kitchen, utility room and a large double front lounge that has acted as a study/meeting room. It also has a garage.

Vision

The current vision of both parishes is to reach out to their local communities in witness of God's love and care. In Groby the church recently spent a year with the short term vision of "Building the Body of Christ, Equipping the Church for Mission". This was a time in which teaching focused on the foundations of our faith and in which relationships within the fellowship were strengthened. As the last incumbent joined Ratby parish the vision there was to see more young families at the church. This has been achieved to a certain extent due to the development of more child focused activities. Both churches now seek a leader to help them develop a more focused vision for the future. This could be a shared vision enabling the parishes to develop better links, and support each other more effectively.



Church Rooms, Ratby

Originally built in 1894 and fully modernised, the building is used extensively by a wide range of the community.



Sunday Lunch Club

Held on the last Sunday of each month in the Ratby Church Rooms.



Ecumenical Links

Both Groby and Ratby churches have good ecumenical links with a sister church in their village. Groby has an excellent working relationship with Groby United Reformed Church where a covenant has been signed between the two churches committing them to work together in local mission wherever possible. They jointly employ a Youth Worker (tbc) and a Children and Families Worker. Ratby has good relationships with the Methodist Church and share occasional worship and witness at special services or village events. As a Church we are keen to strengthen those links.

Churches and Parish Buildings

The two churches share a name, reflecting their history together. They are both in good order. At Ratby we also have the Church Rooms which are extremely well used by the church and community. This is also the location of The Parish Office, which serves the benefice.

At Groby we are seeking to reorder the nave of the church to create a much more flexible space for worship and mission.

We have dedicated bell ringers in both churches who ring on Sundays and for weddings and regularly host visits from other ringers.

Annual Parish Walk

Fun for all the Church Family.



Worship and Discipleship

Our current Benefice policy for baptisms, weddings and funerals is reasonably flexible. Baptisms tend to be conducted outside of Sunday morning family services. We encourage families to worship with us before and after the baptism and we run a baptism preparation course and post baptism anniversary services.

Groby

Groby, electoral role 117, enjoys a variety of services which take place on Sundays and Wednesdays (see appendix). Each with a faithful congregation, the overall average Sunday attendance is 93. The biggest congregation is at the 9:30am service on Sunday morning which also enjoys good fellowship and the most diverse spirituality. There is strong lay involvement in providing Sunday worship and Sunday school, and a lay team who are committed to providing prayer for healing. There are currently four home groups which are lay led and which meet every other week.



Ratby

The Ratby church family, electoral role 61, shares a wide variety of worship: traditional, reflective, All Age and Messy! The average Sunday attendance is 45 and messy Church which is held monthly increases the numbers of adults and children on that particular day.

Occasional ecumenical services are held with the local Methodist church at times during the church year. We currently have three active home groups meeting on a fortnightly basis providing friendship and lively discussion on various mutually agreed topics. Members are given the opportunities to deepen their bible knowledge and fellowship.

Mission and Ministry

Groby

There is an active lay team committed to providing prayer ministry (including healing prayer) after services and at other times, and a telephone Prayer Line ready to pray for people. Groups meet regularly to pray for our fellowship, mission and ecumenical witness. Our Bereavement Visiting Group follows up those in the community who have been bereaved. This group has been working together for many years to provide support and pastoral care during difficult times.

The men's group in our church meets on a monthly basis. This is well established, meeting for fellowship and organising events and speakers. More recently a discipleship group has grown out of this work with the aim of learning from scripture in order to live more Christ-like lives.

A number of other groups meet within our church community, some with a task focus such as churchyard maintenance and others with a social focus such as the Women's Guild. The Events Group facilitate activities throughout the year to strengthen fellowship and build links with the village community. These include an Apple Day with an apple press, Christmas Tree Festival, church family picnics, participation in the Street Fair and Lent Lunches.

As a church we have a number of overseas links whom we support through prayer and giving. The most prominent of these is a missionary family, who used to be part of our church family, working with YWAM in South Africa. We have twice hosted people from the Dioceses of Mt. Kilimanjaro and Kiteto in Tanzania.

Our covenant with the United Reformed Church in Groby greatly influences our mission and outreach. We run a parents/carers and tots group which sustains links with our baptism families and introduces others to bible stories and church friendships. The employment of a Youth Worker (tbc) and a part time Children and Families Worker is a joint commitment, with the help of diocesan funding, and along with a strong Open the Book team, these workers facilitate our excellent working relationship with both primary and secondary schools, and support the RE curriculum. The two workers, with a strong team of volunteers both adults and young people, run a weekly Urban Saints programme for 6-18 year olds. It was also under the banner of Churches Together that we sent 22 people on the Mission Shaped Ministry course (16 from St. Philip & St. James) and we are now praying for, and exploring, new mission initiatives. The most successful of these at the moment is a Saturday morning café with children's activities, which is becoming a strong community in its own right and may well develop into a fresh expression of church. The churches in Groby also work together on Fair Trade and justice issues, raising awareness in both the churches and the wider community.

We are very excited about what God is doing in the village of Groby.

All of the above activities involve teams of volunteers from both of the churches in Groby. More widely, the local community choir, with 200+ members, was started by our previous curate and continues to be organised by a dedicated group of church members.

Fairtrade Fortnight

Raising awareness at Groby Co-op.



Ratby Band

Providing entertainment at Ratby Church fete.



Jubilee Celebrations

Celebrating Her Majesty's 90th Birthday in Ratby church rooms.



Mission and Ministry

Ratby

Outreach in Ratby has a variety of approaches through church or individual initiatives and community involvement. We hold God's generosity and compassion in our witness and outreach and seek to translate this into further evangelistic growth.

We have strong links with the primary school, currently maintained by our curate. The school has also been encouraged to use the church for services and learning opportunities. They hold their special services for Easter, Christmas and Harvest Festival in the church.

The Sunday Lunch Club, which is open to anyone, on the last Sunday of each month, offers a three course cooked meal at no charge. We have a dedicated team of volunteers who prepare and serve the food, and offer transport if required. We now have approximately 35 people who join us for the meal and fellowship.

The church has a Bereavement Team of visitors which makes contact with the next of kin who reside in our parish. We offer support, understanding and a sympathetic ear beyond the first anniversary of a death. Each year we host a Service of Loving Remembrance for the bereaved of both parishes which is always well attended.

Our Community Cinema offers screenings of films in the church for local residents. Our main focus is on family films, screening mainly PG and U ratings twice a month during the school academic year. Audience sizes have ranged typically from 40 to 120 depending on the popularity of the film. We are proud to offer this as a free activity for all.

Ratby's Energize Youth Group is for young people aged between 10 and 18, running on alternate Friday evenings. It is a mix of fun activities, hanging out with friends and an opportunity to explore challenging questions about faith, the Bible and life.

Messy Church has generated new friendships with families and carers. These are made possible by faithful teams of volunteers and have grown into a firm community of trust and love.

Young Families is for babies and toddlers and enables us to sustain links with baptism families as well as drawing in new people. Ratby Pre-School meets every weekday in the church rooms and utilises the church for the Christian festivals. Messy Mondays is an after school club for school aged children and their families.

The Prayer Chain team receives all prayer requests via church members, people in the wider community, the prayer box in church and our dedicated prayer chain website.

We have a dedicated Events Committee who organise events throughout the year. These include skittle evenings, spring, summer and Christmas fairs, Harvest teas, coffee mornings and a church family meal.



Inside the Church, Ratby

Refreshments served at the Ratby
Yard Sale.



As we see Ourselves Now

Groby

As a church family we have thought and reflected on where we are as a church currently. We value many things: the involvement of lay members in services and outreach; the variety of styles of worship which reflect the richness of the spirituality we have; our heart for the local community and the activities this entails; and our close partnership with Groby United Reformed Church. However, as we have such a wide range of initiatives, it is also felt that the key to future success is to prioritise and be more focused in what we do.



Ratby

We offer a variety of worship experience and would wish to welcome and encourage a wider age group including children to worship with us. The church has a strong sense of community and fellowship which extends across the age groups. We recognise the importance of pastoral care and are working together to develop this area of ministry.

Opportunities for children and young people to participate in church-led activities during the week are thriving and are having an increasing impact in our village.



Bishop of Leicester

The Rt. Revd. Martyn Snow visiting the children's work in Groby.



Looking to the Future

We are facilitating new initiatives of outreach and witness, many of them ecumenical, in which we continue to see the Holy Spirit at work in people's lives; we are aware that both villages have many mission opportunities. We also know we need a sharper focus and better development of people and their vocational gifts to enable us to grow spiritually and serve strategically. So in the immediate future we wish to consolidate our strengths in worship and mission, but would then like to discern a fresh vision which will lead us into church growth and fruitfulness. Groby church also looks to reorder the church building so that it can be used in a way which reflects our spirituality and our heart for discipleship and mission, in Ratby we would like to have more ecumenical new initiatives of outreach and witness

Who are we Looking For?

Our views on the qualities we are seeking in our next minister have been gained through asking opinions of our congregations and the wider community along with prayer and deliberation by the groups working on the Parish Profile.

We are looking for a minister who wants to belong and to become involved; a minister who will lead, support, guide and focus our churches' future vision and mission goals.

Our new incumbent will:

- ◇ be a person whose ministry and life is grounded in prayer;
- ◇ show leadership and the ability to delegate and work collaboratively with others;
- ◇ enable and nurture the vocations of all;
- ◇ be able to mix well with people of all ages and backgrounds while having sensitivity and a sense of humour;
- ◇ be grounded in reality, having an ability to relate Christian teaching to daily life;
- ◇ foster new and continued spiritual growth, and the fellowship of existing and prospective church family members;
- ◇ have the ability to work well and collaboratively with all sections of our churches, the institutions in our parishes and our ecumenical partners;
- ◇ lead us in discovering new ways to grow our congregations, building on our existing strengths;
- ◇ lead us in discovering and developing "New expressions of Church";
- ◇ encourage enjoyment of worship, through celebrating what is working and having imagination to develop it further and bring new insights;
- ◇ recognise, and work with, our breadth of spirituality;
- ◇ encourage us in our work with families and young people;
- ◇ develop sustainable ministry amongst the elderly;



Groby Sings

Local community choir concert.



Appendix

Current Staff

Rector: Vacant

Curate: Revd. Rosanne Cooper

Reader: Keith Wignall

Pastoral Assistant: Joan Hawkins (Ratby)

Voluntary Youth Worker: Justin Garratt (Ratby)

Children and Families Worker: John Fryer (Groby)

Ratby Church Warden: Jim Milner

Groby Church Wardens: Christopher Mann & Valerie Doig

Sparkenhoe East Deanery



The Great Big Meal

Making links with Passover, the Last Supper and Holy Communion at Groby Primary Schools.



Confirmation Service

With Bishop Christopher.



Monthly Pattern of Worship Services

Day	Groby	Ratby
1st Sunday	8.00am Holy Communion with prayer for healing	
	9.30am All Age Worship	10.00am Worship 4 All
	6.30pm Holy Communion	
2nd Sunday		8.00am Holy Communion
	9.30am Holy Communion	10.00am Morning Worship
	6.30pm Evening Prayer	
3rd Sunday	8.00am Holy Communion	
	9.30am Morning Worship	10.00am Holy Communion
	6.30pm Reflective Service	3.30pm Messy Church 6.00pm Holy Communion
4th Sunday		8.00am Holy Communion
	9.30am Holy Communion	10.00am Family Communion
	6.30pm Evening Prayer	
5th Sunday	8.00am Holy Communion	
	9.30am Morning Worship	10.00am Holy Communion
	6.30pm Evening Prayer	

Midweek Communion

Groby	Every Wednesday 9.30am
Ratby	Alternate Thursdays 9.30am

Occasional Services 2015	Groby	Ratby
Baptisms	18	18
Weddings	6	8
Funerals	29	27