

PRIEST-IN-CHARGE
(SELF-SUPPORTING OR HOUSE FOR DUTY)

LEAM VALLEY BENEFICE

St Marks, Flecknoe
St Peters, Grandborough
All Saints, Leamington Hastings
(with Church of the Good Shepherd, Broadwell)
St Nicholas, Willoughby

PARISH PROFILE



BISHOP'S INTRODUCTION

'Well done, good and faithful servant!' (Matt 25:21) – words of Jesus that come to mind when I think of the Leam Valley Benefice, and the many people who have served the Lord and the life of the Church in their villages with great dedication and imagination. They are, indeed, good and faithful servants of Christ!

I'm also reminded of another saying – 'Tangerines are not small oranges' – that I've heard used by people when talking about the differences between urban and rural ministry, alluding to the unhelpful tendency of applying urban or sub-urban methods to a rural context, or the unrealistic hope that small rural villages could one day have regular congregations as large as some of those in cities. Well..... tangerines are not small oranges, and God deals with the particularities of different communities in liberating and gracious ways. You'll notice in the Person Specification that it says, 'We would welcome applications from Spirit-filled candidates who understand and value rural life and 'the small'. In other words, we would welcome applications from priests who like tangerines (!) and who can see the great opportunities of ministry in this sort of setting.

As I say, the four parishes have not simply been faithful but also imaginative. They've shown impressive creativity, even ingenuity, in their mission and ministry, adapting to local circumstances, seeking ways to make worship accessible. They've have seen real progress and definite growth as a result. There's a strong level of local community engagement, and morale is good. At the same time, they know there's some way to go before they can truly be the sort of congregations God wants them to be. I found the combination in the pages that follow of honesty about the present and a desire to grow in quality and quantity in the future very moving. Those are good virtues for a new priestly leader to harness.

So if you value 'the small', and would like to build on some very ancient foundations of Christian witness in these historic villages, encouraging and developing the faithful flexibility of many in the congregations as they seek to preserve this witness and proclaim Christ effectively in our own time, then we would love to hear from you!

With my prayers,

+ Christopher



DEANERY SUMMARY

The Rugby Deanery is situated to the North and East of the County of Warwickshire. It shares a border with the Diocese of Leicester to the North and the Diocese of Peterborough to East and is one of the largest Deaneries in the Diocese. There are 29 Parishes varying from urban to rural. Most of the population resides in the town of Rugby and its suburban housing estates (around 70,000 according to 2011 census data) with another 30,000 living in the surrounding areas. There is a lot of new housing planned in the Deanery, not least of all the Houlton development on the old Rugby mast site.

As a Deanery there has been a growing desire for both Clergy and Laity to work more closely together. This is important as there is some feeling of a divide between those working in rural areas from those who are in the town. There have been a number of initiatives in the last year or so that have helped with this situation. A Church Wardens' Forum meets quarterly to discuss areas of mutual concern and to hear talks on various subjects from diocesan staff and others. It has also proved to be a good forum for Wardens to give one another support and share information and give the benefit of experience to others.

A sub-group of the Deanery Mission and Pastoral Committee has been meeting for a while now to look into ways in which we can encourage our churches to give sacrificially. A couple of parishes have volunteered to be pilot parishes to work with the team from the DMPC to see if they can be helped and encouraged in this area.

Another major piece of work is that the DMPC have been asked to undertake is the formulation a Deanery Plan. This is now entering its final stages but careful negotiation with benefice clergy and parishes will be needed to implement some of the aspirations of the Plan, especially the very obvious need for a new system of determining Share allocation. It is intended that this Plan will include a framework for closer working together of parishes on issues of mutual concern and set the parameters for how the DMPC responds to certain issues when they occur so that the deanery is better able to look at mission and ministry in a more cohesive way in a quickly changing environment.

The Deanery Chapter meets once a month for lunch, prayer and support. We are a large group (20 in all) which makes for a great atmosphere. In the last year the Chapter has focussed more on prayer and mutual support than business. The result of this has been a deeper drawing together of clergy in the Deanery. Last summer we shared together in a pastoral/team building exercise by having a day trip on a canal barge, which was such great fun that it looks like this could become an annual event! The Rugby Deanery is a great place to live and to work.

Tim Cockell
Area Dean of Rugby



BACKGROUND TO POST

The Benefice of Leam Valley lies in beautiful countryside in east Warwickshire, and forms the eastern edge of the Diocese of Coventry. There are excellent transport links, and it is close to the local towns of Rugby, Leamington Spa, Warwick and Stratford.

This vacancy has arisen due to the retirement of the previous incumbent in February 2017.

The benefice was formed in 2006, at a time when many multi-parish benefices were being increased in size across the Diocese. The benefice comprises 4 small villages with 5 churches. Congregations are small but have good community engagement and morale in most of the churches is good, though we could do more together. The 4 parishes operate largely as separate entities, very loyal to their churches, and indeed have their own personalities, strengths and weaknesses. This means there is an opportunity to share successes and failures between parishes and hence gain strength from each other. We would welcome an incumbent who will help us work better together as a mutually supportive group of parishes.

The deployment allocation for the benefice was, and remains, a Self-Supporting or House for Duty incumbent, living in Willoughby. House for Duty posts in the Diocese of Coventry are based on a minimum of 20 hours per week, preferably flexible. Any additional hours are on an entirely voluntary basis.

Churchwardens regularly meet together to discuss issues such as parish share, worship, and event planning, and relationships are positive.

We reflect in many respects the joys and challenges of many small rural multi-parish benefices, but with the advantage of having a strategy for health and growth via the 8 Essential Qualities, and a track record of making innovative changes to further our health, including during the interregnum. We would welcome a priest who will help us continue this positive momentum.



LEAM VALLEY AND THE DIOCESAN MISSION PURPOSE AND 8 ESSENTIAL QUALITIES OF HEALTHY CHURCHES

The Leam Valley Benefice is fully committed to fulfilling the Diocesan Mission Purpose. We believe that we will achieve this Mission Purpose by developing the 8 Essential Qualities in the life of the church. However, we have a long way to go to achieve that! But we have made a start!

We have been working together as a benefice since 2006 when our former Priest in Charge was appointed. Although much progress has been made to bring the individual parishes together, the four parishes still very much have their own identities and characteristics. It is for this reason that we have analysed the survey results by the 4 parishes rather than as a Benefice and have added the particular parish details immediately after the survey results for clarity. However, it is clear that there are further benefits that could be obtained by working closer together so that best practices can be fully used and encouragement and learning shared.

A glance through our NCD survey results will show that when we undertook the surveys our churches were small and not in the best of health. They are still small, but we are working hard to improve our weaker areas highlighted by the surveys and so are healthier now, and with better morale, than the surveys would suggest. It would be foolish to think that these parishes have the capacity to become large churches, given the populations of the villages, but we do believe we can still be an effective, if small, part of the body of Christ serving these villages.

ROLE SPECIFICATION

The role of this post is to lead the churches in fulfilling the Diocesan Mission Purpose of:

- Worshipping God
- Making New Disciples
- Transforming Communities.

This will be achieved by developing 8 essential qualities in the life of the churches:

Empowering	Leadership
Gift-oriented	Ministry
Passionate	Spirituality
Inspiring	Worship
Holistic	Small Groups
Need-oriented	Outreach
Loving	Relationships
Functional	Structures

PERSON SPECIFICATION

We would welcome applications from Spirit-filled candidates who understand and value rural life and 'the small', and can flourish within a wide range of Anglican traditions and styles, and who:

- Love to see people and parishes flourishing in their faith, unified, and working together effectively.
- Are passionate about our part in the mission of Christ to all in our community, including children.
- Are a positive presence, creating an atmosphere of friendship and fun.
- Are relevant, down to earth, and able to relate Christian faith well to our rural communities.
- Have a track record of helping people explore Christian faith and become Christian disciples.



THE BENEFICE

History and Location

The Benefice was formed in 2006 when Birdingbury was split away from the then existing grouping of Birdingbury, Leamington Hastings, Grandborough, Willoughby and Flecknoe. The previous 5 Parish Benefice was served by a full-time minister plus a house for duty post.

This new Benefice covers a large area bounded by the A45 to the north east, the A426 to the west (plus Leamington Hastings which lies to the west of the A426) and an approximate line joining Broadwell to the south with Flecknoe to the east. It is a sparsely populated rural area and contains hamlets with long histories.

THE PARISH OF FLECKNOE

Flecknoe is a Norse settlement and has been a village since about 900AD and contains several sites scheduled by English Heritage. At its peak in the 14th century the population of Flecknoe was about ten times its current size, before the ravages of the Black Death took its toll.

The old school has been converted into a well supported Village Hall. The village has a thriving cricket club. The pub serves good food several days a week and has a regular quiz night and a skittles team. Horse riding is popular and there are three stables in the Parish, plus other horse owners. There are a number of other enthusiastically supported Village activities including an Autumn Produce Show as many villagers are keen gardeners', a Progressive Supper, a book club, 'tea and chat' events in the Village Hall, a ladies' running group, a senior's whist drive and a grand bonfire and fireworks party in November.



The Parish is at the Eastern edge of the Coventry Diocese, bordering the Peterborough Diocese, and is one of the most sparsely populated rural Parishes in the Diocese. The Parish includes the hamlets of Sawbridge, Nethercote and Wolfhampcote, as well as several farms.

Two services are held each month, a Holy Communion on the 2nd Sunday and a Family Breakfast service on the 4th Sunday, both at 9.00am. Additional services are held for special occasions, such as Easter and Christmas or on a 5th Sunday as a Benefice service.

Our Breakfast Service was designed by us five years ago to reach out to the community and now has an average attendance of about 25, including 7 children. 4 to 7 from the older generation attend the Holy Communion service.

Encouragingly, the church roll has risen from 7 in 2014 to 15 in 2017, as an outcome of the popularity of the Breakfast Service. This gives good reason to be optimistic for the future. We are looking for someone who can build on the base this has created to take us forward and grow spirituality in our community.

The PCC runs a three-day summer Benefice Holiday Club for children aged between 4 and 10 based in the Village Hall. This attracts about 24 children from around the benefice and is very ecumenical and has involved Methodists, Quakers and Catholics as helpers. The PCC also helps run Messy Church at St Peter's Church in Grandborough which meets on the first Thursday each month. PCC members also hold coffee mornings and a unique 'BIG Breakfast' on a winter Saturday morning. The village is too small to support the summer fete typically used by larger villages as a main source of fund raising.

As our community is small, church officers typically serve for many years. There are no Parish employees. The PCC communicates instantly through a 'WhatsApp' messaging group and e-mail.

8 ESSENTIAL QUALITIES at Flecknoe

The results of our NCD survey carried out early in 2017 showed that we have a long way to go to meet the criteria for a healthy, growing church. However, we are pleased with the growth we have achieved in the last two years and have plans in place to work on the areas where we are now shown to have particular weakness.

Empowering Leadership

After many years of the same people taking responsibility for leadership within the church, we have been encouraged by the fact that last year 3 younger villagers have become involved and joined the PCC, joined by a fourth this year. Their contribution has brought a new life and energy to the parish, which is most heartening. This has happened through the development of our Breakfast Service which we designed to attract families and the young, and has proved both enjoyable and successful.

Gift-Oriented Ministry

This was one of our stronger qualities, and, as often in small churches, much is done by the few who attend. We perhaps need help to see all of the 'jobs' that we do as 'spiritual' and could do with support and training on spiritual matters. One very positive aspect of Gift-based ministry was our decision to develop our Breakfast Service which utilises the talents of many in the church, including people who are good at catering and working with children. This service is designed so that it can be lay led.

Passionate Spirituality

This was our weakest area by far! (although we are aware this is common across many churches in the Diocese). We are all good friends in church, and want to see the church continue and thrive, but we rarely talk about personal spirituality as this is seen as a private matter, and we need help with many of the spiritual disciplines of discipleship (prayer, Bible reading etc). We demonstrate the fruits of the spirit through the voluntary and charity work church members are involved with, both in and outside the church, but need help in being more confident to talk about our faith with each other and the wider community.

Inspiring Worship

This was our highest scoring quality and reflects the satisfaction of the community with our Breakfast Service. This has attracted a number of new people and families and has grown in popularity, especially in the last two years. This service has great potential for further growth. What is often regarded as the 'main' service of Holy Communion (held monthly) now only attracts the older generation.



Holistic Small Groups

We are a single holistic small group of the 8 people that comprise the PCC, split 4 and 4, older and younger generation. This group makes all the decisions for the Parish.

Need-Oriented Outreach

Members of our congregation visit elderly and infirm in our village and help them when needed. There are no deprived areas in this small rural village. The church has a good image in the village, but the faith needs of individuals is not discussed or addressed as most see this as a private matter. Evangelism has been low key as this has been perceived as off-putting for those new to the church. We will need help in addressing the issue of how to help people explore their Christian faith across the village.

Loving Relationships

Flecknoe is a very cohesive village and almost without exception everyone gets on well with everyone else, both in and outside the church. Any newcomers are welcomed and quickly integrated into village or church life, if that is their wish. Church attendance is a good reflection of the people that live in the village.



Functional Structures

All PCC meetings are relaxed and friendly. We meet 4 times a year with additional informal sub-group meetings to discuss planned events such as the summer Holiday Club and Harvest Supper.

Population

Approximately 330 people (including children) live in the Parish today, just over half of whom live in the village of Flecknoe. There are no schools and only one pub in the Parish. The majority age group (35%) is 45-64 and there is an above national average number in the 0-17 age group, while the numbers in the 18-44 age group are well below average. These statistics, based on the 2011 census, reflect the rural setting and above average house prices. Most of the population are affluent professionals.

Buildings

The original Parish church of St Peter's, Wolfhampcote became isolated from about 1500AD after the population had been decimated by the Black Death and almost all those that survived were moved on by the Clearances. It was the building of the Grand Central Railway in the 1890's, which provided compensation money for allowing the construction of the line close to the Vicarage, that enabled a new Vicarage (now sold) and a mission church to be built in the current settlement of Flecknoe. This became the main church for the Parish in the 1950's and the old 12th century church was taken over by the Churches Conservation Trust. Occasional weddings, a summer concert of medieval music and a Christmas carol concert are held there.



The current church building, completed in 1891, was designed by the Rural Dean without proper foundations. Settlement cracks have now stabilised, except for the vestry, and for the most part the simple brick building with a slate roof is low maintenance. There are no major building works planned for the next 5 years. There are a number of fine stained-glass windows, some of which have recently been reset. There is no water in the church, but the Village Hall across the road provides facilities when needed. The graveyard has space for 50 years at the current rate of about one burial per year. On average there is also one wedding and one baptism a year.

THE PARISH OF GRANDBOROUGH

Grandborough is located about 6 miles south of Rugby in Warwickshire and includes the hamlets of Calcutt, Grandborough Fields and Woolscot. Grandborough is about two miles from the nearest main roads and can be reached by country lanes from the A45 to the east, and the A426 to the west. It is located roughly in the centre of the triangle formed by Rugby, Daventry and Southam. Today's community still has strong agricultural links, but there are also many who commute to local towns and cities or even further afield to work. As befits a technological age there has been an increase in home working in recent years.

A strong sense of community has been retained, and there are regular social events centred on the Church, Chapel, Village Hall and The Shoulder of Mutton.

8 ESSENTIAL QUALITIES at Grandborough

Our survey was completed by 9 members of our church in October 2016 and we received the results in March 2017. Even although the sample size was very small, the results revealed that we have a long way to go to be a healthy, growing church! The lowest 10 questions suggest a congregation who are somewhat demoralised with little enthusiasm, but we are confident this will change. We would value a priest to work with us, training and supporting us, rather than attempting to do everything themselves. We believe with the right nurturing our positivity will be restored!

Empowering Leadership

It is perhaps significant that the survey results showed that we think our vicar had taken on too much work. It would be our hope that our next vicar will train, support, and empower us in leadership and in the development of our skills and gifts.

Gift-Oriented Ministry

Most people enjoy the tasks they do in our church and know what their personal gifts are. We just need positive encouragement to ensure these gifts will be used to maximum effect.

Passionate Spirituality

We did not score very well in this quality. What was most concerning was that very few felt enthusiastic about the present and future of our church. We believe that Grandborough as a village has more people with a Christian faith than those currently attending our church, and we hope that a new vicar will give us more confidence in our-selves and the future, and be able to help us attract them.

Inspiring Worship

This was our highest quality and shows that our members feel they connect with God in a meaningful way, and they enjoy the music which helps them worship God. They prepare themselves to participate in the worship and enjoy listening to the sermons. They accept, however, that their worship may not always attract unchurched visitors and so we are open to ideas for different types of services which will connect with more people on a sustainable basis.



Holistic Small Groups

Our electoral roll is now only 13. We have six small groups: the PCC with a membership of 6, Messy Church planning committee with a membership of 3, a flower arranging group of 14, 7 Christian Aid distributors, 14 helpers on a rota at Farmers' Market and a group of 16 church cleaners. Members considered themselves at home within their small group.

Need-Oriented Outreach



Our PCC recognised five years ago that our church did not make much contact with the community and so we asked in a parish questionnaire how we could make more use of the church building. The results we obtained gave us the confidence to start our Farmers' Market on the first Thursday of the month between 10 and 12.30 and start our Messy Church on the same day between 4.30 and 6.30 in the afternoon. Through these events we have achieved our objective to make more contact with the community,

although this has had no effect on church attendance on Sundays. Messy Church, which has an average attendance of 13 adults and 22 children, is now our most popular service, and we are now in regular contact with young and old throughout the benefice. We will need help however to develop 'stepping-stones' for people to explore Christian faith further.

Loving Relationships

This was our weakest quality in the survey, and we are taking active steps to address it as a priority. The survey showed that people thought that there is not much joy or laughter in the church. This was sad! We have had some difficulties in the past, but we are confident that we are on course for this atmosphere to change.

Most members agree that when someone does a good job, we tell them. Our church also has a good working relationship with the local Methodist church and look forward to sharing services during the interregnum and into the future.



Functional Structures

Our church has only recently, due to the interregnum, discovered the concept of the 8 Essential Qualities required for growth. We have therefore had little guidance or experience yet on how our structures can enable these qualities to flourish. However, the atmosphere at PCC meetings is positive and business-like. In 2016, we met 7 times. We are not reluctant to change and have recently installed a fixed projector and screen which will enhance the church facilities and provide an opportunity to show suitable films for all ages, consistent with its role as a place of worship and mission.

We obtained all the necessary licences and permission to sell alcohol at our Farmers' Market, but unfortunately our local publican could not sell enough local ale to make it worthwhile. We have recently installed CCTV cameras in the church and we are planning to open our church for 40 days over and above the normal times of worship. This was a condition for the large grant which we received from the Heritage Lottery Fund to repair and restore the church Stonework.

The Parish

The latest attendance figures for church services are:-

Holy Communion:	11
WtW	21
Evensong	9
Messy Church	30 (this figure includes adults and children)

In 2016, there were 2 Baptisms, 1 wedding, 2 Funerals and 1 Burial of ashes.

The Parish Council have agreed to cut the grass verges adjacent to the Churchyard and the non-consecrated area in the Churchyard, while also financially supporting the maintenance of the church clock, which is recognised as a Parish asset. Regular maintenance of the church and churchyard currently relies on a few unpaid volunteers. This needs to be addressed. The graveyard is still open.

Population

What sort of community we will see over the next 5 years will be determined by the final form of Rugby Borough Council's Housing Development Plan. Current proposals include a new 1,500 house 'Garden Village' at Lodge Farm located on the A45. Strong objections to the proposal have been made, and the opposition to these plans will no doubt be a major focus of Parish action in the early stages of this Action Plan.

Buildings



The first church in Grandborough may have been a late Saxon chapel held by Leofric, Earl of Mercia and his legendary wife, "Lady Godiva". They gave Grandborough and the surrounding land to St Mary's Benedictine Priory, Coventry. Then the Bishop of Coventry gave considerable Priory Lands in Grandborough to his Daughter Celestra and to her husband Noel, possibly as a dowry before 1100. This gift was ratified by Prior Lawrence to Noel and Celestra's son Robert, who is said to be the founder of Grandborough Church.

The present church dates from about the middle and the tower from about the end of the 14th century. There was also a "Chapel of the Blessed Mary of Grandborough" in the medieval period, which is likely to have been a Lady Chapel within the present church. Originally the church was dedicated to St Paul and this dedication was still in force up to 1730 but by 1743 it had been changed to St Peter's.

The church does not have any additional buildings and many church events make use of the well-equipped Village Hall when the church is too cold in the winter. A small leak above the organ has been detected and the PCC will seek to obtain the justification for further grant assistance when our next Quinquennial Inspection is completed later this year. The church has been much better utilised since the introduction of the toilet and servery, Messy Church and Farmers' Market.



THE PARISH OF LEAMINGTON HASTINGS



The parish of Leamington Hastings sits on either side of the A426 Southam to Dunchurch road. It consists of two villages, Leamington Hastings and Broadwell, and two hamlets, Kites Hardwick and Hill.

In 1122 the pastoral care of the parish and maintenance of the church became the responsibility of the Canons of the Augustinian Priory of St Oswald's near Pontefract, by endowment of Aintrop de Hastang, the then Lord of the Manor of Leamington Hastings. The oldest

parts of the church were built in the 12th century but the major construction, with extensions, dates from the 13th century. Over the centuries since, the church has been well cared for and certain areas have been rebuilt or extended on more than one occasion. The font, at the rear of the church, is thought to date from the 1400s.

8 ESSENTIAL QUALITIES at Leamington Hastings

The NCD survey was undertaken in January this year with a total of 17 forms completed. We were heartened by some of the results but others showed that we still have work to do to meet the criteria for a healthy, growing church. We are pleased with what we have achieved so far from our action plan, with a new family attending the Afternoon worship on some occasions.

Empowering Leadership

This was our strongest quality and is reflected in the fact that we have an experienced Reader, who lives in Broadwell, who is available to all the churches in the benefice. There is still however, a traditional expectation that it is the vicar who should be doing most in respect of leadership roles. Everyone who feels able is encouraged to actively participate in worship services and to be involved in the church rota duties, including giving talks at some of the lay led services. There are two lay services each month, a Healing service on the third Tuesday and an Afternoon Worship on the fourth Sunday, aimed at families and children. We have seen some grow in confidence as leaders. Some members of the congregation have attended modules in the *Bishop's Certificate in Discipleship and Mission*. One parishioner has completed both the Foundation and Intermediate levels of the certificate.



Gift-Oriented Ministry

This was our second strongest quality but does not really reflect a sustained effort to identify and encourage individual gifts. Members of the congregation 'help out' where they see a need in order to ensure jobs are completed. People do however, feel valued as part of our community. There is general encouragement for people to be involved in mission within the school, through assemblies and the making of Christingles, for example. We would hope that a new priest will continue to help us to explore our individual gifts and help to train and encourage us to step out in faith to develop our personal as well as our corporate ministry.

Passionate Spirituality

This was our weakest quality in the survey. It was heartening that many knew that others prayed regularly for them and that they found prayer inspiring and life transforming, but many felt negative about reading the bible on their own or about telling others when they experience something of God. There is a very small bible study group which meets once a month in the benefice which is being promoted widely through the bi-monthly magazines and at many services, but the numbers have failed to increase. Some of the negativity may be due to all the pressures that have been on the church over recent years which include a burglary, lead theft from the roof and an arson attack. Energy has been expended on fundraising along with fabric repair and maintenance. This has perhaps left little energy for mission. We have however, attracted new worshippers in recent years. We need help in encouraging people to engage with committed bible study and with sharing their experiences of God and the affect that He has on their lives.

Inspiring Worship

The four services which are held in the parish each month are very different: BCP and Common Worship Eucharist services and laity led Healing Service and Afternoon Worship, aimed at families and children. Some people attend all of the services but others obviously have their favourites and do not attend others (with the exception of the Festivals, which are quite well attended). Some are also reluctant to travel to other churches for Benefice services which are held on the fifth Sunday and also for some of the festivals, such as Pentecost or Mothering Sunday.

The survey results did however, demonstrate that people feel inspired and able to connect with God during the worship and also find the sermons enjoyable, rather than boring.



It is quite clear that our services are not attracting many new worshippers and that we need to find ways to encourage people to come to church. Two new initiatives that are to be tried in the near future are an open church day and a Baptism reunion for anyone baptised in the church since 2000 (personal invitations are to be sent). We would welcome a dynamic, Spirit filled priest who can help us to attract new worshippers but particularly younger people who will help to build a strong foundation for the future.

Holistic Small Groups

This was one of our stronger qualities. Our small congregations at each of the worship services can each be considered to be a holistic small group. Those completing the survey were asked to consider any group in the church in which they were involved including the coffee rota, flower rota, bell ringers, as an Holistic small group and the results of the survey demonstrated that the small groups helped people to grow in their spiritual life and helped them to deal with life's challenges. As already mentioned there is a small bible study group which is not yet well supported by the wider church but does attract committed members of the fellowship. This is perhaps an area which needs further development.

Need-Oriented Outreach

This is not one of our stronger qualities, although it is recognised that we provide help for new Christians to grow in their faith. We have helped to run several benefice Alpha courses which were well attended. We are a very welcoming congregation and take time to get to know and encourage new people. Many lack confidence or feel ill-equipped in the area of evangelism and one or two have expressed the opinion that this is really the vicar's job. We need help to develop our confidence and to reach out more to the community.

Loving Relationships

We are a loving and welcoming community and people feel valued and acknowledged. There is often much laughter in our fellowship times following the worship services and sometimes during the service, when this is appropriate. There are lifelong church friendships. Where we fall down is in our fear of confrontation or challenge - people are very reluctant to resolve issues where there are misunderstandings or disagreements and this could be damaging and is unhealthy. We would welcome a priest who will help us to accept that loving relationships are strengthened when issues are dealt with in a loving and encouraging way. We also need to show our love to the wider community.



Functional Structures

This was one of our weaker qualities. Many respondents felt the activities of our church are well planned and organised and that the contribution of individuals is reviewed frequently, but there is a lack of understanding in how the different parts of the church work together. We would like to see closer communication and working together with the other churches in the benefice. The wardens in the benefice meet together on a regular basis and our PCC meets at least bi-monthly. We need a new leader who can help us to better understand how the church works and to achieve greater benefice cohesion.

Population

There are approximately 400 residents in all and there are 40 parishioners currently on the electoral roll, including 8 from outside the parish. The average attendance at regular services is 14 adults and 3 children. This number rises to between 30 and 40 at the main festivals.

There are no public houses or shops in any of the villages and the main 'industry' is farming, with others travelling away for employment. The Leamington Hastings Church of England Academy is located at Hill and is an excellent small nursery and infant school for children up to the age of 7. (There is a wide choice of Junior schools in nearby villages, including Long Itchington, Southam, Dunchurch, Napton and Stretton on Dunsmore.) There is a close link between the school and the parish. Former Priests in Charge have visited the school regularly and served on the management committee. The link is being continued during the interregnum by one of the churchwardens. School End of Term services are held in each of the churches in the benefice on rotation.

Although a small parish, there is an excellent range of activities on offer including a well-maintained tennis court, a bowling green and a Parish Hall at Hill where; amongst other activities, there are Pilates and Keep-Fit Classes. There is also the Victory Hall in Broadwell and a golf course and driving range at Kites Hardwick.

Buildings

The church of All Saints is a fine, historic and well-loved Grade II* listed building in the South of the village. It consists of a long chancel, nave, north and south aisles and porches, and west tower. There is a good-sized car park next to the new graveyard. The graveyard surrounding the church is now closed, but the new graveyard is open and used. Although the regular congregation is small, it is clear that the wellbeing of the building and the atmosphere within it are valued greatly by a much larger group of people, which is evidenced by the extremely generous donations that have been made to the maintenance and repairs that have been required in recent years following numerous thefts of lead from the roof and an arson attack.



Following the arson attack and extensive fire in 2009, there has been an expert restoration of the church and the south aisle which was destroyed by the fire. The PCC and local residents, contributed £40,000 of “betterment” in excess of the fire insurance allowance for improved lighting, external stonework repairs, roof insulation and sound system of the building. In 2016, all the lead was removed from the nave following a further theft and replaced with Terne-coated stainless steel.

In 2000, the pews at the rear of the church were removed and toilets, a new vestry, kitchen, new bell ringing chamber and meeting room were added. More recently, rewiring of the heating to the remaining pews in the nave, via flush plug sockets in the floor, has changed the pews from fixed to movable. This has made the church a much more flexible venue for many more community activities, including an annual Christmas market. With private donations, a children’s corner was also added in the south aisle with a soft carpet, table and chairs, books, soft toys and colouring books. A Sound Reinforcement and Induction Loop System have also been added in the main nave. With all this work, the condition of the church fabric is now better than it has been for some time. However, with a building of this age, there is always an ongoing need for maintenance work, which will include some of the eroding external stonework.

In 1971, one of the then church wardens, Mr Ray Law, started what has proved to be an amazing series of concerts, by international musicians, which continue in the church to this day.



There are seven concerts each year and they are now run by a separate charity, which pays for the use of the church and also makes donations in respect of fabric repairs. Concert goes with many others contributed to the restoration (for the second time) of the fine and historic tracker organ just a few months after it was restored and installed after the fire. This was due to the extensive damage caused by water following the theft of lead from the new south aisle roof.

There is a ‘Chapel of Ease’ in Broadwell village which is used for meetings and the Benefice Church Office. The recent installation of a water supply and hoped-for toilet in the future, make this an excellent venue for Alpha courses, retreat days and messy church. The monthly Healing service is held here.

A significant element of rural ministry is the importance of the occasional offices. We put a lot of effort into being a welcoming, inclusive church and benefice, especially in relation to funerals, weddings, and baptisms. We also work together with the Methodist Chapels within the benefice with shared services.

THE PARISH OF WILLOUGHBY

Willoughby is an ancient village and is referred to in the Domesday Book and one of the oldest buildings is the church. It is a small rural parish to the south east of Rugby located between Dunchurch and Daventry in the Leam Valley. The A45 runs through the east of the village as does the Grand Union canal. The majority of houses are situated on Main Street and Lower Street. The village is surrounded by farmland, much of which is ancient ridge and furrow.

8 ESSENTIAL QUALITIES at Willoughby

Empowering Leadership

This is one of our weaker areas. Although we achieved some higher scores (eg in giving people the opportunity to actively participate in worship services), overall we need more development and support of lay leaders.

Gift-Oriented Ministry

This was one of our higher qualities. As a congregation, we understand what is expected when fulfilling our tasks in church. People feel valued enjoying the tasks they do and take on roles best suited to them sharing responsibility. However, we probably need help in seeing what we do as spiritually fulfilling rather than just 'jobs' which need doing in the church.

Passionate Spirituality

This was our lowest quality. We are a small community who are close and supportive, and we know that other church members pray for us regularly, but the spiritual vitality and hope in God working in our little village and church needs to be re-awakened. The low score in relation to spirituality probably also affects low scores in other areas, for example Inspiring Worship. We would welcome a priest who can lead us gently into a closer and deeper relationship with Jesus Christ and which will help our faith to become more spiritually 'alive'.

Inspiring Worship

This was another of our weaker qualities. Overall, we have not found worship to be inspiring, frequently get bored, and have not found the sermons relevant or stimulating. We would welcome a priest who can lead inspiring worship for smaller, rural congregations.



Holistic Small Groups

This was our strongest quality. People share lives and faith travelling together on life's journey. We feel at home and help others with the challenges of life having developed trust. People sometimes feel that too much time is spent in groups dwelling on issues that are irrelevant.

Need-Oriented Outreach

We are a small group of worshippers who support each other and others who need us. Although our Passionate Spirituality scores are weak, we still have a desire for others to meet Jesus Christ, and people want to deepen relationships with others who do not yet know Him. We are open minded, encouraging others to join us. We would welcome a priest who can help us help others in their journeys towards and with Jesus.

Loving Relationships

People are acknowledged for the work they do, which makes them feel valued. We are not afraid to ask one another for help, and we give praise to those who give up their time volunteering in the church. One of our weaker areas in this quality is a sense of fun and laughter. It may be that our sense of fear over the future of our church and our lack of positive hope has dampened our spirits. We recognise that happiness and joy are attractive features in a church and would welcome a priest with a good sense of humour who could help us create a happier atmosphere.



Functional Structures

We meet regularly for planning being drawn ever closer by a common desire to do what is best for the church. Effective communication is improving by increased use of e-mails. We do however need leadership support and encouragement to continue in the development of the church.

The Parish

There are two established charities for the village, a Children's Educational Trust and a Charity Trust, they date back to 1437. The village has a village hall which is well used by local clubs and societies as well as being the hub of social activity. The Rose Inn is a popular Gastro Pub and The Cafe, located on the A45 is also a popular spot for villagers and passing trade. A Beauty Salon, Hairdressers is located on Lower Street. There are allotments to the rear of the pond.

Willoughby has a large pond, a playing field/playground located behind the pub and an amenity garden near the Rose Inn. Footpaths criss-cross the village and surrounding countryside.

Willoughby Cricket Club is situated in the village adjacent to Pye Court. It is well supported by the village with a lovely clubhouse.

The following clubs exist in Willoughby: Willoughby Society, Thursday Club and the Women's Institute. They are well-established social groups who meet frequently and provide a wide range of activities and entertainment for the village. There is an elected Parish Council of 5 councillors that meet monthly. They are supportive of St Nicholas church and look after our village.

The average church attendance is 16 adults and 2 children, with larger numbers for festivals and special occasions. Each month the main services consist of: Family Service, Evensong, and a Holy Communion Service. There are currently 30 on the Electoral Roll. We have a small choir who continue to inspire and lead our worship on Sundays and are fortunate to have a talented organist to accompany our services.

The Ladies Fellowship, previously Mothers' Union, is a small group who meet each month.

There are 7 members of the PCC. It is a small group who work well together for the benefit of St Nicholas. There are 2 Church Wardens who were appointed into role during 2016. There are about 5 meetings each year with additional adhoc meetings for special events or work.

Population

There are 192 properties currently in Willoughby Parish with 317 electors over the age of 18. There are 65 children under the age of 18.

Buildings



The church in the village of Willoughby is dedicated to St. Nicholas and is situated to the west of the village standing in its own grounds of 1.9 acres. The church existed in 1215 and in 1232 it was entrusted to the hospital of St John the Baptist, the forerunner of Magdalen College, Oxford.

The present church building dates mainly from the second half of the fifteenth century. The tower, north aisle and nave belong to this period, the south aisle added later, church records go back to 1625.

The church clock was installed in 1947 as a memorial to those who fell in the Second World War. The church tower also houses an early eighteenth century clock and Carillon, which were installed in 1724. The Carillon plays five tunes and is still in use to day. There is an enthusiastic group of bell ringers who practice each week at St Nicholas. In addition there is a hand bell ringers group, consisting of 6 ladies who play for the congregation at Christmas time. They also perform outside for the community.

During 2009 a Memorial Garden was opened by the Bishop of Coventry and offers a peaceful place in the grounds of the church for villagers to visit and spend time. Plaques placed within the garden remember loved ones.

The planned future expenditure on the church is:

- Lightning Conductor, £2410
- Temporary Roof Repair £1693 (Grant for 50% agreed on).
- The PCC is working on plans for facilities inside the church (kitchen/toilet facilities in keeping with the church and to complete a more permanent fix of the roof (Quote of £40000 has been received for this) for which a fundraising campaign to raise funds is planned.

VICARAGE



The Benefice vicarage is situated in Willoughby off Lower Street and enjoys beautiful views over the village fields. It is a modern building in good condition with a manageable garden and suitable for a family.

SERVICES

An example of an average monthly service rota is shown below. We are willing to consider changes to this and would welcome any ideas to improve our beneficial impact.

	1 st Sunday	2 nd Sunday	3 rd Sunday	4 th Sunday	5 th Sunday	Other
St Marks, Flecknoe		9am Holy Communion		9am Breakfast Service	10.30am Benefice HC in rotation	
St Peters, Grandborough	9am Holy Communion	6pm Evensong	11am WtW.com service			Messy Church 1st Thursday
St Nicholas, Willoughby		11am Family Service	4pm Evensong	11am Holy Communion		
All Saints, Leamington Hastings	11 am Holy Communion		9am Holy Communion	4pm Afternoon Worship		
Church of the Good Shepherd, Broadwell						7.30pm Healing Service on 3rd Tuesday

All the services highlighted in the table in red can be lay led. We would expect our vicar to decide which of these they would like to lead and that this choice might vary from month to month.

It is normal for PCC members to prepare the church for services so that the vicar does not need to arrive until just before the service begins.

The above pattern was established with the formation of the Benefice in 2006 to make it possible for the Priest in Charge to take any service on each Sunday in the month. Instead of conventional services, each church has experimented with new services to broaden appeal. These have had some success, but we are open to any new ideas. We are willing to work with the new incumbent to change the service pattern, if they feel the current level is unsustainable.

The numbers of baptisms, funerals and weddings during 2016 were: -

	Baptisms	Funerals	Weddings
St Marks, Flecknoe	2	0	1
St Peters, Grandborough	2	2	1
All Saints, Leamington Hastings	0	5	1
St Nicholas, Willoughby	1	2	3

School Links

A page summarising the work of the DBE with schools can be found here:
http://www.dioceseofcoventry.org/images/document_library/UDR01414.pdf.

The only school in the Benefice is Leamington Hastings Church of England Academy, which is located at Hill and is a small infant school and nursery. It has always had a close link with the church at Leamington Hastings (just ¾ mile up the road). Former Priests in Charge visited the school regularly to take assemblies and also served on the Governing Body. The school link and assemblies are being maintained and End of Term Services for the School are held in each of the churches in turn. Members of Leamington Hastings PCC hold Foundation Governor status at the school (one is temporary until a new incumbent is in post).

The Benefice lies within the Rugby Grammar schools priority area.

Finance and Stewardship

	St Marks, Flecknoe	St Peters, Grandborough	St Nicholas, Willoughby	All Saints, Leamington Hastings	Parish/Benefice Total
General Income	£2,802	£7,625	£3,026	£17,759*	
Planned Giving	£520	£4,350	£3,500	£8,523	
Gift-Aid	£1,503*	Nil	£1,707	Nil	
Fundraising (eg fetes)	£1,004	£3210	£1,730	£800**	
Grants	£2,448**	Nil	£,3150		
General Expenditure	£5,542***	£11,670	£11,425	£51,812***	
Parish Share Contribution	£2,461	£6,409	£6,000	£8,054	
Unrestricted Reserves	£5,018	£17,301	£2,000	£65,087	
Restricted Reserves	Nil	£12,659*	£13,000	£688****	
Any special considerations, future expenditure etc?	*Two years. **Includes £2,148 for stained glass repairs. ***Includes £4,296 for stained glass repairs.	*Restricted use for maintenance of the church building		*Includes £2,400 hire fees for concerts and Planned Giving (see below) **restricted for churchyard maintenance ***Includes £30,356 for roof repair ****restricted for CoGS & churchyard maintenance	

Notes on Finance and Stewardship:

All data in above chart is from 2016 accounts

Clergy expenses are met in full within the above expenditure figures.

*It can be seen above that Leamington Hastings holds some significant reserves. £47,159 of these monies are from what is left of a legacy left to the parish in the 1920s at the time of the creation of the Church of the Good Shepherd in Broadwell. These are held in an investment account, the dividends from which have helped to ensure that, in many of the last years, the Parish of Leamington Hastings has been solvent at the end of each financial year, despite expenditure exceeding income.

The Leamington Hastings parish share, which makes the largest contribution to the benefice share, has had to be paid from our reserves on more than one occasion over the last few years.

The remaining monies in the reserve are from funds collected during the recent major repair and restoration works on All Saints Church (repair of crumbling stonework on the upper levels of the Tower, restoration of the whole church after the arson attack and subsequent Fire, the Organ restoration after the flood caused by the theft of lead from the roof and the rebuilding of the porch to the north door of the chancel). The PCC decided to move these funds from Designated Reserves in 2015 to fund the following mission and building projects:

- A donation to the Via Beata Way Station being constructed in the South Porch.
<http://www.viabeata.co.uk/>
- A free Mission event planned for Advent ‘Journey of the Magi’ to be held in church, with hopefully a workshop for the school children included.
<http://springsdancecompany.org.uk/index.php>
- The installation of toilet facilities at the Church of the Good Shepherd in Broadwell. This will enable us to use this welcoming and comfortable space for Alpha courses and Messy Church but also for Retreat days for individuals or groups from the benefice and from the diocese.
- A donation towards the kitchen and toilet facilities at Willoughby to enhance their mission projects.
- Repairs to the stonework of the church, particularly around one of the windows which is in danger of falling out.
- The resurfacing of the paths to the church as they are very uneven and slippery when wet which presents a potential hazard to people using the church.
- Repair to the listed front wall of the church yard, which was damaged when a diseased tree had to be cut down.

The Benefice does recognise the contribution to mission other churches in the Deanery and Diocese make who are not able to pay their way. As the Benefice has for many years been served by a non-stipendiary minister and therefore has lower costs, it has always made a contribution to the Deanery and via the Deanery to the Diocese to support mission in other churches. This amounted to £4,271 (8.5% of benefice income) in 2016.

A copy of the accounts for each parish for the last 3 years is available on request.

Ecumenical Links

For many years there has been a strong ecumenical link in both Grandborough and Broadwell (Leamington Hastings parish) with our Methodist neighbours who have a Chapel in each location. Bi-annual joint planning meetings are held and combined services take place at least twice a year and our Benefice Lent discussion groups are always held jointly.

Administration

There is a Benefice Church Office in the Church of the Good Shepherd in Broadwell. Parishioners are asked to come for the administration to be completed for baptisms and weddings. During baptism preparation, a Thanksgiving Service is offered for babies and children - an opportunity to pray for the child and the parents.

The people running the office are from each of the churches in the benefice and work on a rota. They see this as an important part of their personal ministry to our communities and an excellent way to get to know people and to tell them about our churches and services.

There is no benefice website, but St Peter's Grandborough have their own web site at www.stpetersgrandborough.co.uk, which has a link to the "Leam Valley Messenger". The Messenger is distributed in hard copy to every household in the benefice every two months and electronically to a growing circulation. The current editor lives in Grandborough and manages the web site. In addition, there is an equivalent Methodist publication, the "Broadwell Mail", edited by a resident of Broadwell which is distributed monthly to the Leamington Hastings parish.

FURTHER DETAILS

For further information about the post please contact the Archdeacon Missioner, the Venerable Morris Rodham, on 07506 731892 (Morris.Rodham@CovCofE.org) or Area Dean, the Reverend Tim Cockell on tel: 01788 812613 (E-mail: rectorbilton@icloud.com).
Informal conversations are very welcome!

An application form can be downloaded from the Diocesan Website:
http://www.dioceseofcoventry.org/vacancies/current_vacancies

Closing date for applications: Noon, Friday 5th March
Interviews will be held over 2 days, Mon 19th and Tue 20th March

An enhanced DBS disclosure is required for this post.