

## **The Barnham Broom and Upper Yare Group Ministry**

**Welcome** to the BBUY profile as together we seek to witness in our rural communities to God's love as revealed in Jesus. This is an exciting opportunity to lead Christian ministry across 13 rural parishes (15 churches) in central Norfolk. The Benefice is well established, collaborative and financially responsible, serving a population of over 3500 people.

### **Our new Rector**

We are praying for a Rector who will share our love for rural Norfolk and bring warmth, energy and hope to our scattered but welcoming communities. We seek a personable individual, led by faith, who values traditional worship, yet is open to creative, family friendly approaches; who delights in getting to know people of all ages and walks of life; and who will nurture faith through care, prayer and presence. We look for a team player able to encourage and equip our lay leaders and PCC's with the vision and practicality to help our churches grow in confidence and faith. A Rector who listens, laughs and leads by example; who understands the rhythms of village life; who embraces those of other faiths and none, and who will help us see our ancient churches, not as relics of the past, but as living places of worship, friendship and community at the heart of our parishes.

### **A word of encouragement**

The Barnham Broom Group

Benefice began in the 1960's and was one of the earliest large Benefices to be created. The Upper Yare churches were added in 1985, becoming a legal entity in 1990. This is a Benefice in which the parishes have demonstrated the value of cooperation over a long period.

## **The qualities needed in a Rector for these parishes**

The 13 parishes together form a diverse rural Benefice with populations varying from fewer than 30 to around 800, and churches varying from lively village hubs to quiet historic sanctuaries. To serve them all well, a Rector will need a distinctive blend of pastoral, organisational and missional qualities.

1. Deep pastoral sensitivity and approachability
  - Able to connect warmly with elderly congregations while also inspiring young families
  - Comfortable visiting parishioners in scattered rural settings, offering personal pastoral care and presence
  - A good listener, approachable and trusted – someone who ‘feels local’
2. Visionary leadership rooted in practical realism
  - Brings a clear, hopeful vision for rural ministry – one that values traditional worship whilst welcoming innovation
  - Able to encourage renewal in struggling parishes, helping them see a positive future even with limited resources
  - Understand that each church has a different capacity – can set realistic expectations and celebrate small successes
3. Community builder and Collaborator
  - Sees the whole community as the parish, not just Sunday congregations
  - Enjoys working with village groups, schools and parish councils, attending local events and bringing people together
  - Able to spot and nurture lay leadership, encouraging churchwardens, PCC’s and volunteers
  - Builds partnerships across parishes to share ideas and resources
4. Adaptable and creative worship leader
  - Comfortable with both traditional liturgy and informal, family friendly worship such as Bubble Church
  - Enjoys experimenting with new forms of worship suited to each community’s context
  - Able to work with limited facilities (no water, power or toilets in some churches) while keeping services welcoming and meaningful

5. Strong organisational and administrative skills
  - Capable of managing a large multi-parish Benefice, keeping communications clear and balanced
  - Competent in delegating, coordinating rotas and ensuring governance and safeguarding standards are met
  - Works in harmony with the Benefice Secretary, Treasurer, Safeguarding officer and Executive committee members
  
6. Financial awareness and Stewardship
  - Understanding parish finance and stewardship, able to help PCC's build sustainable giving and fundraising
  - Encouraging practical fundraising and community events (concerts, fetes, festivals) that bring people together and raise income
  - Knowledge to support building projects and grant applications, liaising effectively with Diocesan and Heritage bodies
  
7. Respect for rural life and heritage
  - Appreciates the beauty and historical importance of ancient churches whilst recognising the need for practical adaptation
  - Sensitive to rural rhythms – farming life, small schools, village traditions
  - Understands that presence and continuity are as valuable as large-scale change
  
8. Prayerful, grounded spiritual life
  - A person of deep faith, sustained by prayer and community life
  - Models Christian discipleship authentically in small, personal settings
  - Brings spiritual encouragement and renewal to sometimes worried congregations
  
9. Team spirit and willingness to share ministry
  - Works effectively with Readers, AWA's, APA's (Authorised Pastoral Assistants) and retired Clergy
  - Sees themselves as part of a collaborative ministry team, not a solo performer
  - Values lay contribution, helping others to grow in confidence and calling

10. Energy, resilience and joy

- Brings energy and enthusiasm without over-extending
- Balances pastoral presence with personal rest and healthy boundaries
- Radiates hope, humour and gratitude, helping maintain morale across the Benefice.

The Rector will provide spiritual leadership across the Group, supported by a strong team of Authorised Worship Assistants (AWA's), including 2 ordinands in training, a Lay Reader and a retired Methodist minister licensed by the Bishop to administer the sacraments.

Governance is shared through an effective legal structure:

- Group Council (meets 4 times yearly)
- Group Executive (day to day oversight)
- Group Secretary and Treasurer
- Dedicated Safeguarding officer

The Benefice operates successfully as a single entity despite having 15 churches and PCC's. The Rector is supported administratively and is not expected to lead fundraising for Parish Share – this is led by the laity.

## Ministry life

### Services

A monthly Group Communion service rotates around the parishes (30-50 attendees), often including the Group choir.

4-6 services are held on other Sundays across the Benefice, at least half of these taken by Authorised Worship Assistants and others. Congregations vary from 3-20, with more at times of Festivals.

Communion and Morning Worship Liturgies are from *Common Worship* and bespoke services are available for festivals and Group events.

Most services are conducted without excessive formality. When the choir is present robes are usually worn.

Historically the Benefice has hosted 7-12 weddings annually and 10-12 funerals. (Breckland Crematorium is 10 minutes drive from the Rectory). Baptisms are few, but are encouraged even if connections with the parish or Benefice are tenuous.

Regular morning and evening prayer (the latter by *Zoom*) are held, together with monthly Fellowship and Home Communion groups.



## Training

The Benefice has a strong track record of nurturing vocations, having produced several Ordinands in recent years. It is an excellent setting for mentoring and training Curates and lay leaders. There is a Curates house in Barnham Broom.

The Group currently boasts 1 Licensed Lay Reader and 6 Authorised Worship Assistants. These meet at least 3 times a year with the Rector for discussion and mutual support.

## Music

There are 2 regular and 2 occasional organists willing to travel across the Benefice. Some parishes have organists only willing to play in their own parish.

The Group choir (8-15 members) rehearses regularly and sings at most Group services as well as at Festivals. An independent choir (*D'Capo*) is run by a church member and draws singers from a wide area. This choir often sings at special occasions throughout the Benefice.

Bells are rung in 3 parishes and regular practice sessions are held weekly at Reymerston.

## Safeguarding

The benefice is committed to the care and protection of children, young people and adults involved in church activities and recognises that this is the responsibility of everyone who participates in the life of the church. We have a dedicated safeguarding officer (S.O.) across the Group who works with the Diocesan safeguarding team in responding to concerns and offering care. The Group Secretary and S.O. oversee the safer recruitment of volunteers, including DBS checks, role descriptions and safeguarding training. More details can be found here; [www.groupof15.org.uk](http://www.groupof15.org.uk).

## Administration

Over the last 40 years the Group has developed an effective governance structure which welds together the interests of the 13 parishes within the Benefice. All churchwardens are members of the Group Council together with other appointees including the Group Safeguarding officer. The Council is chaired by a Lay Chair who also chairs the Group Executive (5 members plus Rector, Group Secretary and Group Treasurer and Safeguarding Officer). This committee has day-to-day responsibility for Group matters.

Group Council allocates Group Share, agrees Service provision, oversees *Group News*, the Benefice magazine, reviews Safeguarding reports and decides on Group charitable giving and events. Meetings offer an opportunity for the Rector to report on activities across the Benefice.

### PCC meetings and APCM's

Most PCC's within the Benefice hold only 1 formal meeting annually – the APCM. Other business is done informally and minuted as necessary. A number of PCC's are content to run their own APCM's with Agendas and relevant information provided by the Group Secretary. At most, the Rector need only attend 3-5 APCM's annually.

### Parish Share

The Benefice consistently pays its Share in full, supported by Group fundraising, magazine income and a small lottery club. Full payment of Share is rare in rural Benefices within the Diocese.

### Communications and Outreach

*Group News* is produced monthly by a volunteer editor and printed externally. The oversight committee (including the Rector) meets monthly. It is delivered by volunteers to every household in the Benefice. Not only is it a valuable means of communication to everyone across a wide area, but also contributes c.£3,000 annually to Group Share.

The *Group of 15* website is a useful source of up-to-date information. It is managed by the retiring Rector's wife who is willing to continue until a replacement for the role can be found.

### Parish Charities

Most parishes retain small historic charities intended to dispense 'welfare' to those in need within the parish. Within the Benefice 6 charities have agreed to share resources and local knowledge under the 'umbrella' of a Benefice charity to enable transfer of useful sums of money to needy individuals.

## Children, Youth and Schools

### Schools

There are 3 primary schools in the Benefice, including 1 Church school. Strong links have been developed with 2 of these (Barford and Barnham Broom). Garvestone school situated only 50m from the church has recently shown interest in increasing work together.

### Youth work

The Group hosts 2 regular 'Youth Cafes' run by North Breckland Youth for Christ, with occasional help from the Rector.

### Bubble Church

This initiative began in summer 2025 for families with children aged 3-8 years. Conceived by a church in inner London this telling of the Christian story through puppetry has transferred successfully to its first rural location at Hardingham church. Staffed by AWA's and the Lay Reader the initiative attracts 5-7 families each fortnight on Sunday morning. It may be possible to build on this success to develop material for 8-14 year children in future.



## **Buildings**

The Benefice cares for its historic medieval churches. Significant restoration and development work has been completed across several parishes with major projects planned (including Wrampingham's 'community hub development'). Details of individual parishes and their communities follow.

## **The Rectory**

The modern Rectory in the village of Reymerston, which is centrally positioned within the Benefice, also boasts a separate office for the Group Secretary. The Rectory possesses four bedrooms.



## **The Current Rector**

Unusually, the current Rector will remain living in the Benefice. He will be fully occupied with his new role as Rural Chaplain for Norfolk. He has made it clear that he expects to take no part in the affairs of the Benefice following his retirement as Rector. Mary, his wife, is a Lay Reader and actively involved with children's activities within the Group as well as currently maintaining the website. She is happy to continue to take services and be involved with youth work subject to agreement with the new incumbent.

Appendix: The Barnham Broom and Upper Yare Group Ministry - structure

<b>Governance</b>	<b>Worship &amp; Pastoral</b>	<b>Parishes</b>
Group Secretary	Rector	Whinburgh
Group Treasurer	Licensed Lay Minister	Westfield
Lay Chair	Worship Team – 6 Authorised Worship Assistants	Reymerston
Group Executive(6)	Pastoral Team – 3 Authorised Pastoral Assistants	Thuxton
Group Council (30+)		Garvestone
Safeguarding		Barnham Broom
		Brandon Parva
		Barford
		Carleton Forehoe
		Hardingham
		Kimberley
		Runhall
		Wramplingham

Individual church electoral rolls numbers (2024) are: Wramplingham 10, Barford 12, Kimberley 5, Carleton Forehoe 10, Barnham Broom 5, Brandon Parva 7, Runhall 7, Hardingham 10, Thuxton 5, Garvestone 9, Reymerston 3, Westfield/Whinburgh 6, Cranworth/Southburgh 14.

## Group Activities

Morning Prayer

Home Communion

Night Prayer (Zoom 1 x weekly)

Group choir

Group News

Fund raising

250 Club

Parish lunches

**A Bell ringing team practices weekly and rings in three church towers.**

## NOTES:

The Group Secretary acts as Treasurer to the top 5 parishes (above right). Whinburgh and Westfield and Carleton Forehoe have PCC's but no churchwardens; Thuxton has 2 churchwardens with support from the Group Secretary and Reymerston and Garvestone have no serving officers and are run by the Group secretary and Rector.

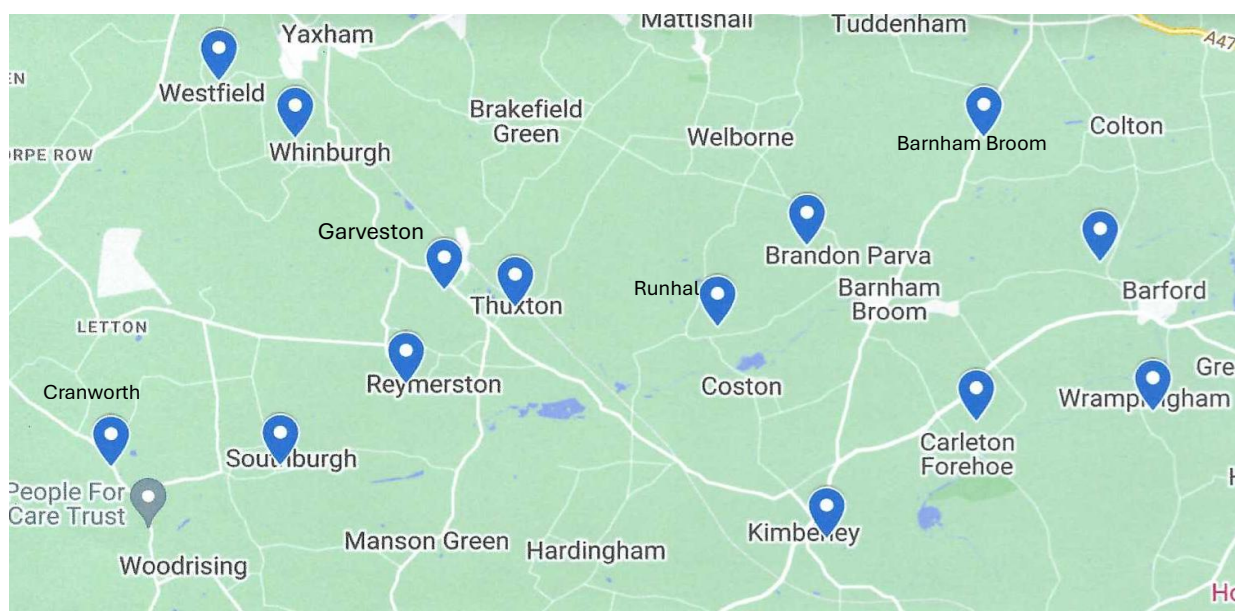
All other parishes have PCC's, treasurers and two churchwardens, except Kimberley, which has one.

The Rector, Group Secretary, Group Treasurer and Lay Chair meet regularly. The team meets about three times a year for prayer and study over Saturday breakfast.



## The Parishes in detail

The Barnham Broom and Upper Yare Group Ministry is a mature, collaborative Benefice that demonstrates long-term stability, strong lay leadership, and creative rural ministry. Serving 13 parishes with 15 churches across 44 square miles, the Group operates as a single mission community rather than as isolated churches. This model offers an incoming Rector strategic oversight, pastoral depth and significant opportunity for growth.



The Benefice stretches between Dereham and Wymondham in central Norfolk. Most villages lie within a 15 minute drive of each other. The Rectory is centrally placed in Reymerston and contains a separate office facility for the Group Secretary. Norwich is 25 minutes away. Rail links are available at Wymondham and Norwich. The central location allows for collaborative ministry without excessive travel.

## BARFORD

### Snapshot

A thriving village of c.515 residents with primary school, several small industries, bar-restaurant, village hall, playing field and several active community groups. St Botolph's church (13/14<sup>th</sup> century) is well maintained and recently refurbished. Monthly worship attendance averages 14 with many more at festivals. The church has close links with the school. A number of activities are run in conjunction with other groups in the village.



### Vision

Barford has real potential to become a hub for intergenerational ministry. Building on the track record of this parish the PCC hopes to install kitchen and toilet to enable weekday community use, parent and toddler groups and café church initiatives. Continued partnership with the school offers natural pathways for family discipleship.

## BARNHAM BROOM

### Snapshot

A large village of 900+ residents with primary school, post office, public house, restaurant, village hall and large golf and country club, together with a small industrial estate. The church lies outside the main village area. Community life is vibrant and largely centered on the village hall and the sports club. The church school maintains close relations with the church and the current Rector is a Governor. A modern rectory adjoins the church and this is currently let by the Diocese but could be used again by a curate. The 14th century church ran a major appeal to renew the bells in 2012-18, which created strong community engagement. Regular bell ringing continues. The PCC has achieved a great deal despite being small. Recent repairs have been carried out to the east window and chancel ridge. The churchyard is managed as a wildlife area.



### Vision

Building on successful fund raising for the bell project Barnham Broom could develop seasonal outreach events, outdoor worship and partnerships with the golf club. Improving facilities within the church could attract more community use.

## BRANDON PARVA

### Snapshot

While the village has only c.40 people, the Church led by strong Church Wardens is lively and has grown in recent years. The congregation is determined, despite being in an isolated position, to pray, sing and learn about the faith. Without modern facilities the congregation enjoy the organ, powered by an electric battery, numerous candles after nightfall and amazing cakes from enthusiastic supporters. All Saints church is 14/15th century. Repairs to the tower were carried out in 2018. Like most churches repairs to the fabric are advised but the raising of money has been addressed by the enthusiastic PCC which was recently strengthened, and by a supportive church community. Monthly services are held and church life is undergoing a renaissance with participants of all ages.



### Vision

Brandon Parva offers a model of faithful small church ministry. Creative low-cost worship, lay leadership development, more events and increased fellowship with the local community could further grow attendance. Plans are in place for long term funding to secure the building for the future.

## CARLETON FOREHOE

### Snapshot

The once Saxon village of Carleton Forehoe consists today of 24 houses. St Mary the Virgin church is the only community building and it picturesquely situated in a meadow with car parking available, courtesy of the neighbouring farmer. The original round tower collapsed in 1711 followed, soon after, by the present square replacement . The nave and chancel are both 14/15th century. There is an open first floor gallery at the west end of the nave where occasionally early madrigals are sung. A series of thefts of lead from the roof has now resulted in a modern replacement material of no interest to thieves. Structurally the building is sound, and for many its lack of modern facilities is a delight. The organ is still hand pumped and rechargeable lanterns, heaters and candles are still used. The PCC is small but enthusiastic. A prayer meeting is held every Wednesday. The carol service is typically packed, with standing room only. A new incumbent will be pleased to learn that the dangerous tradition of a Christmas tree lit by open candles has recently been discontinued.



### Vision

The church attracts visitors because of its 'quaintness' and the warm welcome afforded all visitors. This may be the key to its future – attracting visitors seeking traditional rural spirituality. Occasional pilgrim services and heritage days could support mission.

## CRANWORTH with LETTON and SOUTHBURGH

### Snapshot

Cranworth and Southburgh comprise one widely scattered parish. Letton Hall, a Christian Conference Centre, lies on the outskirts of Cranworth. The populations of Southburgh and Cranworth are about 70 and 400 respectively. Cranworth has an attractive village hall which can be used by the church. Church leaders can use the kitchen and toilets of the village hall in the absence of facilities in the church itself.

St Mary's, Cranworth is an attractive 13/14th century church with a fine organ. The village green provides parking space in front of the church. The building is generally sound but as with churches everywhere will need regular attention. St Andrew's, Southburgh was originally 14th century then rebuilt around 1878 after a fire. Parking for church congregants can be an exciting experience in the field opposite. Since 1981 united PCC churchwardens have exercised responsibility for both church communities. There are currently 2 churchwardens and 4 PCC members. St Andrews, which has a fine acoustic for music currently has some roofing issues. Monthly summer services are held at Southburgh and winter services at Cranworth.





Southburgh

## Vision

The PCC at Granworth and Southburgh is proactive, and services are supported by a variable number of congregants. Traditional annual services are well attended, as is the annual Stocks Fair, a major fund-raising event. There is potential outreach opportunity for greater association with Letton Hall.

## GARVESTONE

### Snapshot

Garvestone lies midway between Wymondham and Dereham. The beautiful medieval church of St Margaret is close to the large modern village hall and primary school. Pupils move on to high schools in Dereham or Wymondham. The church is open daily for prayer and is in good repair and well cared for. There is an interim Churchwarden, a fabric officer and a small PCC. Within the church several pews were removed from the south aisle some years ago, to create a carpeted open space for meetings and for children to play. The church has 5 bells and a bellringing group rings here, and at Reymerston and Barnham Broom. The congregation works closely with the local Methodist Chapel, sharing alternate monthly services and social events. An annual Remembrance service at the church is followed by the laying of a wreath at the village hall recognising the sacrifice of American air force crew killed while trying to land at a nearby base in WW 2.



### Vision

Village life centres around the school and the excellent village hall. Pupils in Year 6 enjoy twice monthly Youth Café in partnership with North Breckland Youth for Christ. The church has recently been approached by the school to work more closely with its Forest church initiative starting in Spring 2026. There are various conservation projects in the churchyard. Some funds are available toward installing a kitchen and toilet in the church although no plans have been drawn up yet.

# HARDINGHAM

## Snapshot

The village of about 300 people is scattered across the large parish. The memorial Hall (1920) serves the beautiful cricket pitch and the well used children's play area. Proceeds from the popular annual fete are shared between the Hall and the Church. To the north of the parish is the former Hardingham Station, now undergoing restoration. To the west of the village centre is the fine 13th century St George Church beside the old rectory. Two active churchwardens and a PCC of 5 organises everything from a flower rota to the welcome of congregants. Attendance varies from a packed church at Christmas to more modest congregations through the year. It was recently modernised with a kitchen and toilet with upgraded electric lighting, heating and a sound system. Besides monthly church services the church is frequently used for special services because of its size, modern facilities and easy parking. A large open area at the rear of the church is convenient for meetings. 'Bubble Church' for children up to 8 years old and their parents is held fortnightly. It is popular and growing.



## Vision

Hardingham is well placed to become a Benefice mission centre for children and families. If Bubble Church is developed in future for children between 8-14 years, this will be an ideal venue for it.

## KIMBERLEY

### Snapshot

This small village of 25 houses clustered around a village green has a population of c.100. It lies 3 miles NW of Wymondham on the edge of Kimberley Park. There are no village facilities apart from the beautifully appointed church of St Peter (14/15th century). There is a PCC of 4 and, as with several of our parishes, the Share allocation is met in full. The parish hosts a large and well attended annual fete and has been an enthusiastic organizer of Group charitable events, including help for Ukraine, supported by other churches within the Group.



### Vision

Kimberley plans to develop creative worship styles, seasonal services and social gatherings to attract younger households from surrounding parishes.

## REYMERSTON

### Snapshot

The medieval church of St Peter sits near the centre of this village of about 250 residents. Beside it is the modern Benefice Rectory and the small village hall. The church is regularly used for social events, hosting craft fairs and Saturday cafes alongside monthly Sunday services. A millennium bell project saw the restoration of the 6 bells, popular with local bell ringers who practice here weekly. A WW1 centenary project in partnership with the Parish Council and Heritage Lottery Fund saw the restoration and reconsecration of the overflow churchyard and the creation of a memorial garden at the rear of the church. Recent legacies have enabled installation of new heaters and lighting and there is access to the village hall toilet if needed. Twice weekly morning prayer takes place in the church during summer months. There is a small PCC and the Rector and Group Secretary administer the church. Monthly services are attended by a delightful group that may lack numbers but radiate enthusiasm.



### Vision

The layout of the church and its central location in the village could lend itself to some conversion to community uses. With investment to provide facilities in the church and partial internal layout re-ordering, there is potential for a shared community space.

## RUNHALL with COSTON

### Snapshot

Runhall is a rural parish of about 100 people. Coston exists only as a farm, a few cottages and the small church of St Michael which was declared redundant and is vested in the Churches Conservation Trust. Runhall All Saints retains a Saxon round tower with a pre-conquest door. Its nave is medieval and its chancel was lost in the 16th century. Structurally the church is in reasonably good condition. The priority is to improve surface water drainage and repair superficial cracks in the walls. There is no designated parking area. The village has no other public building but it has a popular children's play ground.. There is a small PCC of 4 and variable congregation size. The village has a strong community spirit and the church has recently been joined by some newcomers with a lively faith.



### Vision

A case could be made for modest expenditure to enable greater use to be made of the building for special events such as harvest suppers, heritage open days and outdoor worship – reconnecting the community with church life.

# THUXTON

## Snapshot

The village of Thuxton with 50 inhabitants is based around the church, the station and railway line which is now managed by the private Mid Norfolk Railway. Thuxton shares the excellent village hall at Garvestone having no community facilities itself. The church of St Paul dates back in part to late Saxon/early Norman times and contains an early 13th century font. The tower, added later, appears to be unfinished and is topped by an unusual octagonal structure. The church has electricity and water but no toilet . It was recently re-wired and new heaters installed. There is a small PCC assisted by the Group secretary. There is limited parking at the church. Monthly services attract a variable number of congregants.



## Vision

Greater integration with Garvestone activities may increase visibility and attendance.

## WHINBURGH and WESTFIELD

### Snapshot

A joint civil parish with a population of 390 is widely spread. While there is no shop, school, hall, or public house, Dereham is in easy reach.. A village playing field with a pavilion in Whinburgh serves as a village hall for some activities. The two churches share a joint PCC and services alternate in the two churches on a monthly basis. St Mary's church, Whinburgh is 13/14th century and St Andrews is 14/15th century. Both buildings are in good condition, and are by the main road,. Parking at Westfield is on adjacent land but is more cramped at Whinburgh . While the churches offer no toilet or kitchen the enthusiastic congregation bring refreshments for the end of monthly services.



### Vision

Fund raising concerts have successfully attracted many visitors from beyond the parishes. Further development of the churches as cultural venues – music, art, history could strengthen mission with imaginative creativity.

## WRAMPLINGHAM

### Snapshot

Wramplingham is a village of about 120 people which relies on neighbouring Barford for the provision of a shop, village hall, playing field and primary school. The round towered church of St Peter and Paul combines Saxon and medieval origins and boasts a wonderful chancel with much admired lancet windows. Off road car parking for light vehicles has been recently provided by the enthusiastic church community that has great plans for the future. Their hospitality to members of the congregation defies the current lack of kitchen. The building has electricity and the walls are sound, however, the roof needs renewal. The monthly services average 10 participants. There are two active churchwardens and the PCC of 5 is energetic, organising social events in the church and in the village. A well attended weekly prayer group meets in Wramplingham on Fridays.



### Vision

The PCC recently received DAC permission for a major scheme of repair and reorganization designed to make the church a modern hub for many forms of community activity. This should not only benefit the village but also offer the best chance for the future of the church, which will then provide a warm and functional open space for alternative forms of worship.