

# **St Mary's Church, Rushden**

with

## **St Peter's Church, Newton Bromswold**



**Parish Profile 2022**



## Welcome

Thank you for taking the time to read our Parish Profile! We hope that it gives you the opportunity to learn a little more about us.

We are praying and we're excited to see who God will bring as our next Rector.

Over the next few pages we hope that you will get a clear picture of our church, our strengths and challenges and how you may be able to journey with us, to grow God's kingdom in our Parish.

We hope that God will bless you as you read and stir your heart if He is calling you to find out more.

We look forward to hearing from you.



The Archbishop of York said *"The best way to save the parish is to grow the church. And the best way to grow the church is to proclaim the Gospel. And the best way to proclaim the Gospel is so to live your life in Christ that the beauty and the radiance that we see in Christ shines in our lives and makes a difference in the world; it is the pursuit of holiness and the transparent, transformative indwelling of Christ that will save the parish"*.



# Who are we looking for?



Can you:

- Be our leader? Someone who can lead us from the front; forward into growth, new challenges and some needed changes. Someone who can lead alongside us; working with us, supporting us and praying for us. Someone who can lead from behind us; following sensitively, encouraging us, but keeping us moving forward where God wants us to go!
- Teach us? Especially the good news of Jesus and God's love for all He created. We have been blessed with good biblical orthodox teaching for many years and we value that and look forward to more.
- Encourage young families, children and young people? We need to focus on growing our All age worship?
- Help us to show Jesus love to our community and be salt and light to it?
- Help us to grow in the depth of our relationship with God?
- Help us to continue to explore the many gifts that God gives us through His Holy Spirit and how we can receive them and use them to bless and encourage others?
- Be vibrant, creative and energetic? Someone who can help us to explore a more charismatic and spirit filled approach to our family worship, but who is also comfortable with a traditional approach that is valued by many.
- Help us to 'make disciples'?
- Help us develop a vision for what God wants us to do and are you comfortable with managing change?
- Be a team player who can work with, delegate to and deploy lay people as well as retired clergy?
- Show a loving heart, support and nurture our congregations and help us to care for all in our communities?
- Be an active and visible presence in Rushden and Newton Bromswold?



# Rushden

Rushden is a large town and civil parish in the North Northamptonshire unitary authority in the county of Northamptonshire.

The parish of Rushden covers an area of some 9,000 acres. The population of Rushden was 29,272 (Census 2011), making it the fifth largest town in the county. The estimated population of Rushden in 2015 was 30,282 and is now thought to be around 33,000. The St Mary's Parish population is around 12,000.

Rushden lies on the A6 midway between Bedford and Kettering. The southern limits of the town border on the county of Bedfordshire, and to its north lies the River Nene (locally pronounced Nen) which flows into The Wash. From whichever way Rushden is approached, the streets and roads can be seen stretching out in the valley, with the spire of St Mary's church prominent above its rooftops.

Rushden's growth resulted from a number of industries, including lacemaking and farming but especially shoemaking and associated trades. In the mid-1900s there were well over 100 boot and shoe factories in Rushden but today only a small number remain.

Today, as with many towns in England, industry in the town is varied, and mostly situated in edge-of-town industrial estates. As with the industry, town centre shopping in Rushden has changed considerably although there are still many shops. Rushden has the oldest toy shop in the county.



Rushden Hall is the oldest domestic building in the town, owned by many families throughout the years including the Sartoris family and the Pemberton family. The hall now functions as the head office of the town council and some rooms are available for hiring. It lies in 32 acres of land which now is a public park (Hall Park).

In early 2011, improvements to the High Street began with regeneration on the 'southern gateway' and a creation of a 'town square' in the middle of the High Street. Also a greenway cycle and foot path was created joining existing footpaths with a new one along the old railway line through the town. This linked Ferrers School to Rushden town centre and then out of Rushden to Crown Park, a small out of town retail/business park which includes a DIY store, a pet supplies store and Waitrose Supermarket.





## Rushden Lakes

A new £140 million out of town leisure and shopping centre known as Rushden Lakes opened in July 2017. The development is situated just off the A45 on the site of the former Skew Bridge dry ski slope, which had been derelict for some years.

The Lakes is home to stores such as Marks and Spencer, Primark, Next, H&M, JD Sports and many more. There are also many busy restaurants, including Wagamamas, Zizzi's, TGiFridays and Nando's. There are excellent indoor facilities for children's activities and there is a multiscreen cinema.

Rushden has two other main leisure facilities, The Pemberton Centre and Splash Pool. Both are managed by Freedom Leisure, so membership covers both venues. The Pemberton Centre is a large leisure and conference centre including a large hall, conference rooms, sport hall, gym, young person's gym, squash courts and dance studio. The Splash Pool is situated close to the town centre and includes a 25-metre-lane swimming pool with a learner area, beach area and indoor slide.

Rushden has one secondary school and several good primary schools.





# St Mary's Church

## History and Description

St Mary's Rushden occupies a prominent position at the southern end of the High Street and is one of three evangelical Parish churches that are part of a group ministry in Rushden (although the three Parishes work independently of each other).

Earliest records show the first Rector, Thomas of Northampton, was appointed in 1230, but it is most likely that a church has been on the site since 1105 when the Priory of Lenton was established.

In the late nineteenth century, a school was built adjacent to the church. This was subsequently purchased from the local council by the churchwardens and serves as a church hall. A bigger, modern church hall was attached in 1982, so that the church could have full catering facilities, an office, toilets and greater hall capacity.

In more recent times, substantial sums have been spent on the upkeep of this beautiful Grade 1 listed building, which today is in fine condition!

The setting, in attractive well-kept grounds, is raised above the level of the surrounding roads so that the Tower and 172 feet tall spire are visible when approaching the church from any direction.



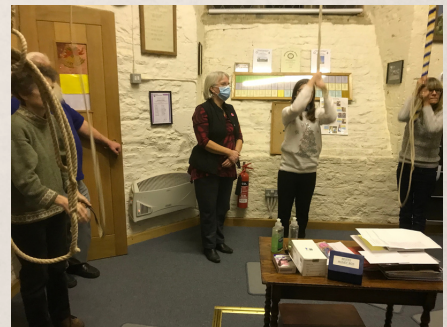


## What do our services at St Mary's look like?

We have two services currently on a Sunday morning.

The 9-30am service is our All age worship and is where we see the greatest need for innovation, creativity and change. We need to work hard to attract children, young people and families to this service. The worship is supported by a worship band.

The 11-15am service is a more traditional BCP and Common Worship service and is supported by a choir and organist. We have a band of bell ringers who ring each week between services.



Our service pattern is:

	1st Sunday	2nd Sunday	3rd Sunday	4th Sunday	5th Sunday
9-30	Communion	All age	All age (Parade)	Informal	All age
11-15	Morning prayer	MP	Communion	MP	MP

There is a short Bumps and Babes service each Monday in term time.  
Each Thursday there is a 10-30am BCP communion service.

Our current numbers for each service are:

9-30am 60 adults and 7 children (95 and 19 pre-covid)

11-15am 30 adults (44 pre-covid)

Monday Bumps & Babes service 12 adults and 14 children (18 and 21 pre-covid)

Thursday Communion 15 adults (22 pre-covid)



We have a PCC which consists of 2 Churchwardens, a PCC Secretary, 2 Treasurers and a Trainee treasurer, a Safeguarding officer and an additional 14 elected members. We have 192 on our electoral roll.



# Newton Bromswold

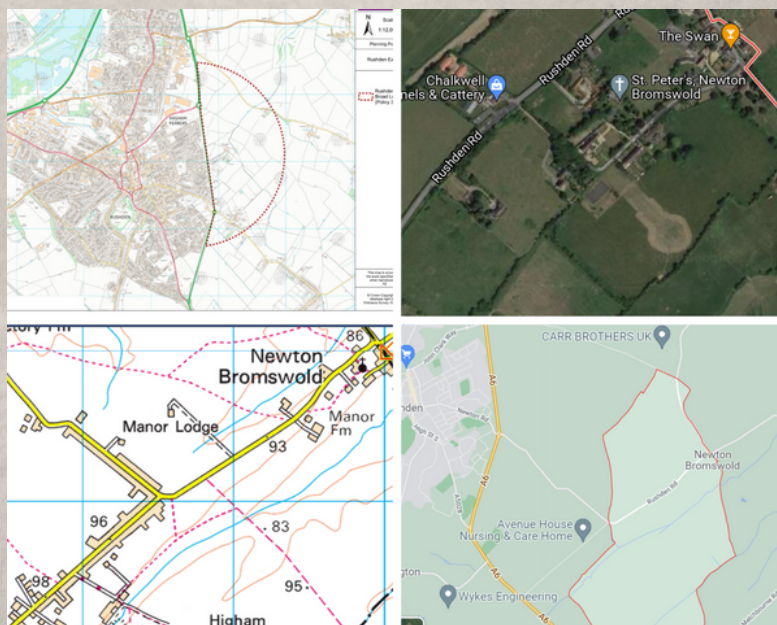
Newton Bromswold is a small rural village on the Northamptonshire/Bedfordshire border, located approximately 3 miles to the south east of Rushden. The Grade 1 listed Church of St Peter is the oldest building in the village. The Church is a 13th century medieval building, and the last quinquennial was undertaken in 2020, where the Church was defined as being in good condition, with no major work outstanding. The village consists of approximately 25 houses and 60 people.

Newton Bromswold has a public house called The Swan, which is used by the Church for events such as Carol Singing. Church events are well supported by the local communities. There is also a Village Hall, which is mainly where the Little Stars nursery meet daily during term time.

Newton Bromswold has the Extra Parochial Place of Higham Park attached to it, consisting of 3 houses. The congregation is augmented by the residents of the Court Estate which has around 300 homes and people travelling from Rushden. Court Estate is situated in the parish of St Mary's and is a ribbon development of mainly detached houses and bungalows along two roads, Newton Road and Avenue Road.

The planned Rushden East development will be adjacent to the parish of Newton Bromswold. The proposal consists of around 2,700 new homes, a new school and new employment opportunities including offices and industrial premises.

The Church has a pew heating system, which is very economical and has proved popular with the congregation. The Churchyard is open for burials and cremations and this year there has been one burial in the Church. The churchyard is maintained by the Churchwarden with occasional volunteers. The Church is managed for wildlife and has won 'The Wildlife Trust for Northamptonshire, Churchyard Conservation Competition' numerous times.





# What do Newton Bromswold services look like?

Our Family Services are a more relaxed format, whereas Morning Prayer and Holy Communion follow a more traditional pattern.

We know that we need to focus on attracting families and children to Church from our surrounding communities and offer services suitable to them. We would want the Rector to be interested in the village church and local community.

During COVID, St Peter's has held Church services when the Church has been allowed to do so and when services were prohibited the Rector has contacted the congregation regularly. The Congregation has been able to attend online services, with services coming from St Mary's.

On Christmas Eve, the Church holds a Carol Service which is well attended with 120 people, which is the maximum number of people that can be accommodated in the Church.

First Sunday	11.00am Family Service CW
Second Sunday	11.00am Holy Communion CW
Third Sunday	11.00am Morning Prayer CW
Fourth Sunday	11.00am Holy Communion CW
Fifth Sunday	11.00am Morning Prayer CW

Church Services are attended by older people, who range in age between 50 and 85, with the occasional younger person. The minister wears robes for Church services.





# Church life

Our Electoral Roll in 2021 was 20 and our average Sunday attendance in 2019 was 11.

St Peter's Church has its own PCC, which meets regularly during the year. The PCC secretary assists with the administration of the day to day work of the PCC, as well as the Church communications such as updating websites, posters, arranging leaflet drops to the surrounding area and advising the local media of events.

The PCC Treasurer deals with the finance of the parish including paying weekly collections into the bank and managing regular giving. Our General fund holds £15k

The PCC has two Churchwardens and a Parish Safeguarding Officer.

Since 2019, Children's activities have been undertaken at the back of church, but since the end of lockdown there have been no activities for Children as there have been no children in Church.

Before lockdown, the Church held Christingle, Children's Carol Services with puppets and Bug Hunts in the Churchyard.



## Community Activities

The Church holds the following events each year:

- Village Fete which is well supported by the Village and the local community. In 2021, the Fete raised £1500 for Church Funds.
- Cowslip and Fritillary Day, where the Church is open and afternoon teas are served and plants are sold.
- Leaflet drop to Newton Bromswold and Court Estate regarding Christmas and Easter Services

The following events are held in the Village pub, The Swan

- Carol Singing
- Harvest sale, which is the auctioning of Harvest produce
- Beer and Hymns evening (this is a Higham Deanery event)

The Church supports the Rushden Food Bank



Friends of Newton Church have also held events to raise money for the Church including Barn Dance, Quiz Night, Open Gardens and Beetle Drives.



# What are our challenges at St Mary's?

- Attracting more families and younger people to church
- Engaging with our local community, serving them and having an impact
- Continuing to recover from the pandemic
- Delegating to and deploying lay leaders
- Reaching and engaging with teens and twenties
- Maximising the potential we have through live streaming our services





# What are our strengths at St Mary's?

- We are a welcoming church!
- There are always people willing to pray for others.
- There are good Pastoral care systems in place.
- Our important link with Recovery House.
- Outreach to families unconnected with church through Bumps and Babes and Who Let the Dads Out.
- Good biblical teaching.
- Many years of good teaching about stewardship and generous giving.
- Variety of styles of worship
- We have a number of home groups for studying the bible together, fellowship and pastoral care.





# What areas of ministry do we need to focus on?

- Working with families, children and young people
- Community outreach; being a Christian is an opportunity to be blessed and to share God's love in our lives.
- Growing life long, active disciples.
- Working more regularly in the local schools in our Parish.
- Meeting the needs of our more mature worshippers.



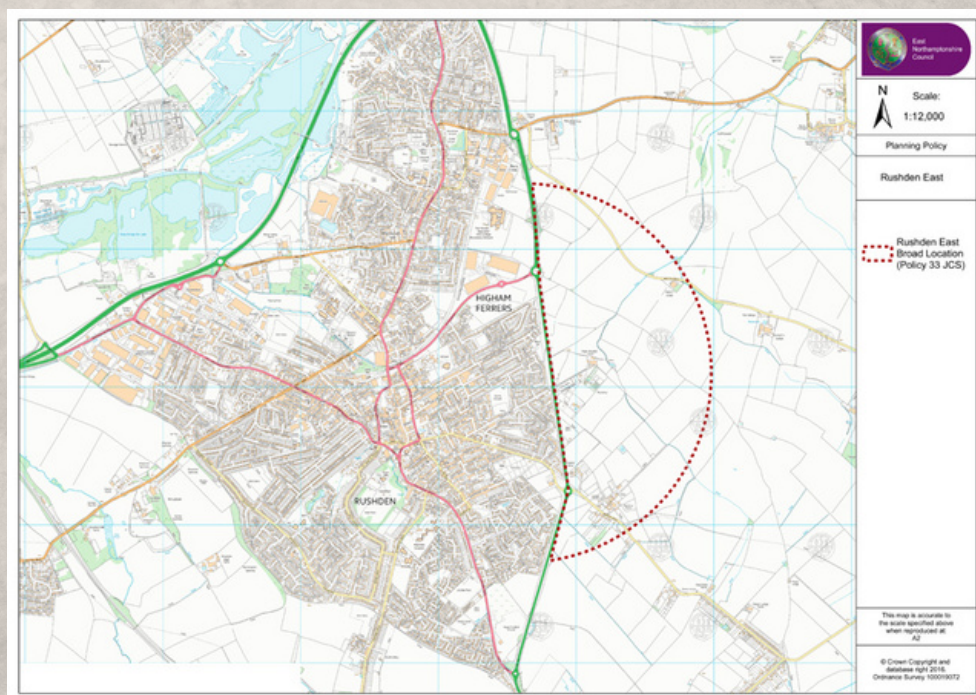


# Exciting possibilities!

There is a planned development project called Rushden East that will be sited between both Parishes and will hopefully provide some exciting challenges and opportunities for us. Some money has been set aside to reach out to this new community when it moves to the building phase. We need to be able to introduce ourselves and be able to welcome them into both of our churches.

What can be expected? Some of the highlights include:

- Around 2,700 new homes, including affordable housing and homes for the older population.
- Employment opportunities, including offices and industrial premises as well as 2 local centres, small-scale business space and dwellings suitable for home working or business start-ups.
- New schools (with possibilities of a Church of England school) for local education provision.
- A new town park, open greenspace and play areas.
- Land for a new cemetery and other local community facilities such as allotments.
- New links to connect with the wider Greenway network.
- An energy strategy to ensure that the highest viable amount of heat and energy used within the development is generated on-site from renewable or low-carbon sources.





# Three current areas of church life at St Mary's which are ripe for continued development!



Firstly, Who Let the Dads Out? This activity happens once a month and is aimed at Dads and children up to the age of 7. Dad brings the children, helping to grow that relationship. Dad also gets to meet with other dads and enjoy a relaxed chat, a good breakfast and great play opportunities for the children.



Secondly, Bumps and Babes. This activity happens weekly during term time with Mums being able to come with their babies and pre-school children to meet, chat, eat and have a short children focused time of worship together in church. This is currently run by our Children and Family worker but could also benefit from additional volunteers.



Thirdly, our link with Recovery House. Recovery House is an 8-bed residential drug & alcohol rehabilitation centre for men. It is based in Rushden but welcomes residents from any area in the UK. Previous clergy have had contact with this centre and a number of our congregation volunteer there. Most residents also attend our family service each Sunday and receive a Recovery Bible from us when they graduate to the next stage of their recovery.



# Where will you live?

There is a five bedroom modern, light family home which is 1.4 miles (4 minute drive or 25 minute walk) from the church in a sought after recently built estate on the Southern edge of Rushden. There is some work to be completed at the property, including the conversion of one of the garages into an office and a new kitchen to be fitted, which will ensure that this is a very welcoming home for our next Rector and family.



## What about our finances at St Mary's?

We have been blessed with good biblical teaching around stewardship on at least an annual basis, for many years. We have always paid our Parish share in full (in 2021 this was £82673). We benefit from many members of the congregation who give generously using the Parish Giving Scheme and we have the following reserves:

General fund £109,000  
Designated funds £13,000  
Restricted fund £160,000



This has meant that our church building and Halls are in good order and we can currently employ a part time Children and Families worker.