

# The Rutland Church Trail

Welcome to the Rutland Church Trail. Churches have been places of Christian worship since Anglo Saxon times and reflected in these important community buildings can be seen centuries of culture, patronage, politics and local building materials from a particular area.

Dr Hoskins, in his Small Guide to Rutland, says “no other county in England surpasses Rutland for unspoiled, quiet charm... they say the best things come in the smallest parcels”. Rutland is, indeed, very small and yet, dotted around its unspoiled countryside, rural towns and villages, Rutland possesses a large number of impressive limestone-built churches.

We hope that you will enjoy visiting our rich and timeless heritage and share in the witness that continues to this day.



## ST. PETER Brooke



**Special Feature:** Used for a scene in the film of “Pride and Prejudice”  
**Bells:** Restored and augmented to 6 in 1992  
**Places to Eat/Drink:** Nearest are in Braunston  
**Public Transport:** None  
**Church Open:** Daily

This tiny village treasures a most interesting church. Its south doorway is Norman, as are the arcade and font. The tower is 13th century and there is a 14th century south window. The rest is late Elizabethan, remaining virtually unchanged until today.

The Tudor round arches blend well with those of the 12th century. The late Elizabethan oak fittings are of more than usual interest, with box pews and panelled screens. There is a marble tomb chest with the effigy of Charles Noel who died 1619 aged 28 and some interesting floor monuments.

The clear glass above the communion table admits the morning sun and a view of the



hedgerow, in lieu of any reredos. The interior is bright, simple, and above all, there is a wonderful harmony and sense of continuity of worship.

## ST. PETER’S Barrowden



The village of Barrowden, lies on the slope leading down to the River Welland. Essentially south facing, the largely limestone dwellings and village greens are seen at their best in the sunshine.

The present church, at the western end of the village, has parts dating from circa 1210, such as the chancel arch. During the 13th century the north and south aisles were added, along with the porch. Towards the end of the 14th century the tower was built and now houses the six bells. The font, just inside the door, is thought to date from around this time as well.

Change has always been part of the church's existence in Barrowden and the spectrum of ages and styles can be clearly seen today.

This is an active church with a variety of weekend and weekday services.

**Special Features:** Numerous interesting and historical features throughout the church  
**Bells:** 6  
**Places to Eat/Drink:** Exeter Arms  
**Public Transport:** Buses from Uppingham, Stamford, Peterborough and Leicester  
**Church Open:** Daily

## ST. MARY MAGDALENE AND ST. ANDREW Ridlington

Overlooking the valley of the River Gwash, this conservation village forms an idyllic backwater, with evidence of a settlement dating from the Bronze Age.

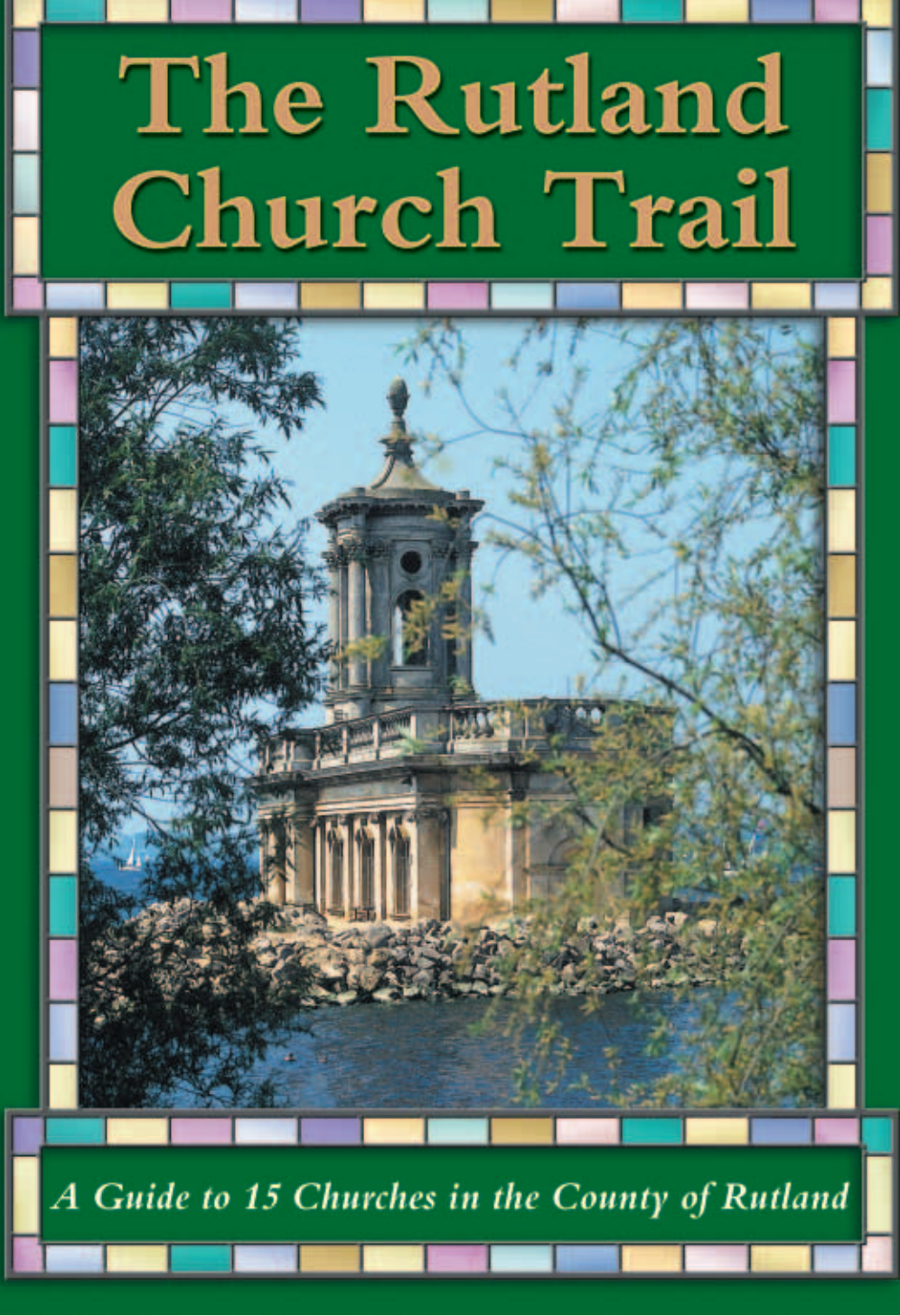
Set in the heart of the village, the present Church is of 13th century origin, but its raised position and curved boundary indicates a possible site of a pre-Christian significance and it is likely that there were earlier churches on the same site; the tower was added in the 15th century and the whole was extensively enlarged and renovated by the Victorians in 1854.



**Special Feature:** Monument to Sir James and Lady Harington  
**Bells:** 4  
**Places to Eat/Drink:** Uppingham, Wing, Manton, Braunston  
**Public Transport:** Translink to Oakham via Braunston  
**Church Open:** Daily



Front cover: Norman Church, Rutland Water



## ST. MARY’S Ashwell



Until about 1911, Ashwell was an estate owned village and St Mary's church stands at its largely undisturbed centre. Mainly of 14th century origin, serious restoration of the church was undertaken by the great Victorian architect William Butterfield in 1851. Butterfield designed the lych-gate, rebuilt the top of the tower and redesigned the interior, making it one of his most important restoration projects.

In the south chapel there is a wooden figure of a crusader of

about 1280 and in the churchyard there are the remains of a holder of the Victoria Cross (VC), The Rev JW Adams MA VC who died in 1903 as vicar having won his VC in the Afgan War.

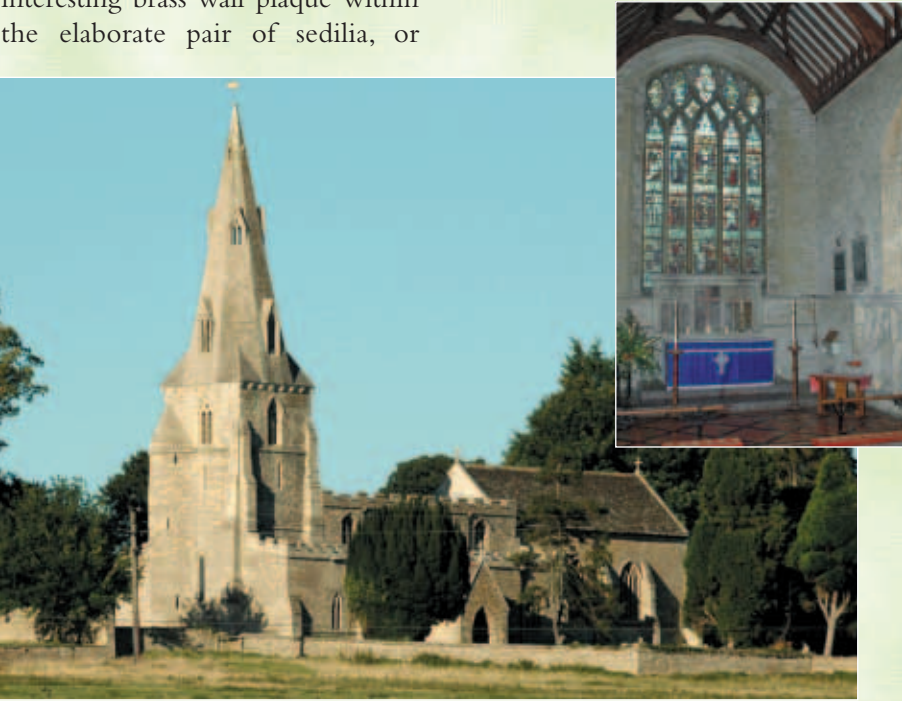
**Special features:** Butterfield restoration  
**Bells:** 1  
**Places to Eat/Drink:** None  
**Public Transport:** Oakham to Nottingham bus service  
**Church Open:** Key Available

## ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST North Luffenham

North Luffenham is 2 miles south of Rutland Water and the large church is found below the village school with beautiful views over the Chater Valley. It dates from the 11th century, but has a typical medieval layout, wall painted decoration, 14th century stained glass, wooden roof musician angels and a fine broach spire. North Luffenham's most famous resident was Archdeacon Robert Johnson, who founded both Oakham and Uppingham public schools in the 16th century. His interesting brass wall plaque within the elaborate pair of sedilia, or

clergy seats, is set in the south wall near the altar.

**Special Features:** Pair of Sedilia clergy seats and 40 commonwealth war graves in the churchyard  
**Bells:** 6  
**Places to Eat/Drink:** Horse & Panniers and Fox & Hounds  
**Public Transport:** Buses from Stamford-NL-Uppingham, daily, Oakham-NL-Barrowden, Wed only and Leicester-NL-Stamford, 2nd Wed only  
**Church Open:** Daily

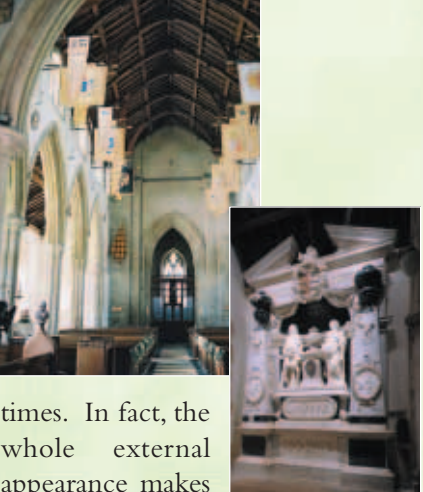


## ST. PETER AND ST. PAUL Exton

This unexpectedly large church (for the size of the village) is set in Exton Park, the seat of the Earls of Gainsborough (the Noel Family).

It is not known exactly when the first church was built at Exton, but history records for us that the De Brus family gave land here to the monks of Saint Andrew's Priory at Northampton, sometime in the mid-12th century. So it may well be that the first church was built here soon after that.

The present church dates from the 13th and 14th centuries, though it was much restored in Victorian



times. In fact, the whole external appearance makes it seem all Victorian. The cause of the restoration was a hailstorm in 1843, when the spire was struck by lightning and masonry fell into the nave, destroying the roof and the old gallery at the west end and the windows of the south and west ends were completely shattered.

**Special Features:** 9 monuments from the 16th-18th century, replicas of funerary and armorial banners of the Noel family and 3 stained glass windows  
**Bells:** 6  
**Places to Eat/Drink:** Fox & Hounds public house  
**Public Transport:** Rutland Flyer bus service between Melton Mowbray and Corby (via Oakham). Mon-Sat.  
**Church Open:** Daily

Contact Patricia Hagger on 01572 813118

## ST. PETER’S Belton In Rutland



Belton In Rutland is set in beautiful countryside on the north side of the A47. ‘The Leicestershire Round’ and ‘Leighfield Way’ walks pass through. Crowning its hilly position is the Church of St Peter; the limestone tower can be seen from miles around.

The Church is entered through a 14th century porch, immediately to the left is a splendid 13th century font. The south arcade dates back to circa 1200. The present layout is a result of restoration in 1897-8; the woodwork being the work of a local carpenter.

The Reredos, unusual altar, and organ case are of Victorian design in the style of G Bodley and have recently been restored. A mystery yet to be solved, are the recumbent effigies of medieval notables which now form the top layer of a section of the roadside churchyard wall.

**Special Features:** Unusual late Victorian Chancel & furnishings  
**Bells:** 6  
**Places to Eat/Drink:** The Sun Inn, Belton and nearby Uppingham  
**Public Transport:** Bus Service 747 - Leicester to Uppingham, Mon-Sat, Hourly. Interconnects in Uppingham to Oakham, Corby & Peterborough  
**Church Open:** Key Available





## ST. MARY THE VIRGIN

### Edith Weston

Edith Weston takes its name from Edith, Queen of Edward the Confessor, who gave her this part of Rutland. The Church dates from circa 1170 and the present chancel arch, built in 1250, incorporates work from the earlier date. The 14th century tower and spire are fine specimens of Gothic architecture. The altar stone in the north chapel is possibly of medieval origin and, with several



memorials to the Heathcote family, came from St Matthew's Church, Normanton (which was partially submerged when Rutland Water was filled in the late 1970s); it is depicted in the small stained glass window behind this altar. The chamber organ is a particularly fine example of the work of Samuel Green. It was built in 1787 and restored in 1981.

**Special Feature:** Samuel Green organ

**Bells:** 6

**Places to Eat/Drink:** Wheatshaf Inn

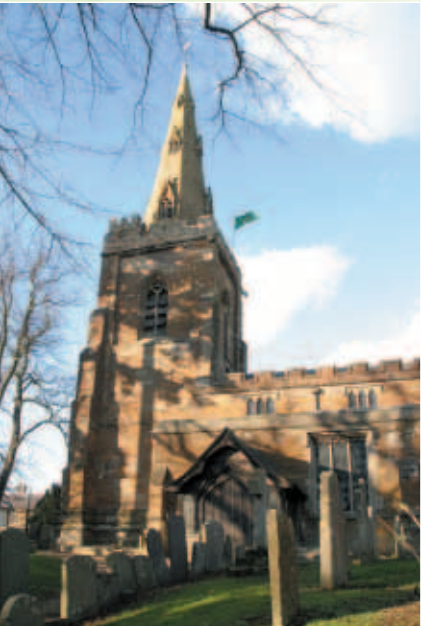
**Public Transport:** Bus service from Oakham and Stamford

**Church Open:** Daily



## ST. PETER AND ST. PAUL

### Uppingham



Uppingham Parish Church is mainly a 14th century building, reconstructed in 1861 and re-ordered in 2002-4. Four sculptured fragments remain from a pre-Conquest building, two flanking the north doorway and two more in the North (Lady) chapel. The early-medieval font was re-instated in 2004, after many years of disuse. Graffiti, carved on the westernmost arch of the south arcade was carried out by generations of boys from Uppingham School, whilst seated in the



gallery, which was removed in 1860. The modern statues of the Patron Saints, Peter and Paul, are by Siegfried Pietzsch and attached to opposite piers of the nave arcade. The Triptych of the Madonna of the Presentation of David Kirk was dedicated in 2005 and hangs at the east end of the north aisle. The stained glass is particularly fine.

**Special Features:** Bishops Jeremy Taylor and Edmund Bonner were both rectors here

**Bells:** 8

**Places to Eat/Drink:**

A wide range in the Town. Market day - Fri

**Public Transport:**

Bus services from Leicester, Peterborough, Corby and Oakham

**Church Open:**

Daily 8.00 am to 5.30 pm. Morning and Evening Prayer and Eucharist daily. Lunchtime concerts at 1.20pm on Weds in term time. Tel: 01572 823381



## ST. ANDREW

### Whissendine

Whissendine is one of the larger villages of Rutland, tucked away in the north-west corner of the county. Appropriately, the church is one of Rutland's largest, with an imposing tower that is a landmark at several miles distance. The earliest parts of St Andrew's date from the 13th century, but the fabric contains



**Special Features:** Gargoyles, medieval screen

**Bells:** 6

**Places to Eat/Drink:** The Three Horseshoes, The White Lion Inn and Slipcote

**Public Transport:** Nottingham to Oakham bus service

**Church Open:** Daily



evidence of subsequent attention in the 15th, 18th, 19th and 21st centuries. The spacious interior boasts numerous features of interest. These include an excellent collection of gargoyles, a medieval wooden screen (brought to Whissendine from the old chapel of St John's college, Cambridge) and a fine Victorian reredos.

## ST. ANDREW'S

### Hambleton

Hambleton is surrounded by Rutland Water, a reservoir completed in 1976. It is today a classic example of an English village church, but its origins were very different. Set on high ground in the centre of the County, the large Norman church is one of the oldest and was the most important in the County. It was part of the dowry of the Queens of England. The main body and tower, most of the pillars, entrance arch, stoop and font, date from 800-1190. Few alterations were made until the outstanding Victorian refurbishments of the 1890s. These were classic of their time and created the interior as we now see it, the fine stained glass windows, ornate organ,



pulpit, lecturn, hangings, altar frontals and much else.

**Special features:** Organ supported by pre-Raphaelite Angels and Stained glass windows by student Burne Jones.

**Bells:** 5

**Places to Eat/Drink:** The Finches Arms and Hambleton Hall

**Public Transport:** From Oakham - 1 bus Saturday only

**Church Open:** Daily



## HOLY TRINITY

### Teigh

From the outside, a small church of good proportions, built mainly in the 18th century and entered by the west door into a porch which is also the base of the tower. The main building is entered through inner doors, revealing pews running the length of the nave and an interesting Flemish painting of The Last Supper over the altar. To the southside of the altar, a brass tablet records that all the eleven men and two women who went from Teigh to the Great War returned home safely. Teigh is known as a 'Thankful Village' on that account. Turning to look back towards the door, visitors are always surprised to see a triple decker pulpit over and around the entrance, backed by a Trompe L'Oeil



window. This 'Strawberry Hill Gothic' arrangement is believed to be a unique feature.

**Special Feature:** Pulpit

**Bells:** 3

**Places to Eat/Drink:** None

**Public Transport:** Melton to Oakham bus service, Mon-Sat

**Church Open:** Daily, during daylight hours



## ALL SAINTS

### Oakham

All Saints Church, with the nearby Castle and Tudor building of Oakham School form the historic centre of Oakham, the County Town of Rutland.

There is evidence that there has been a church here since at least 1200, with the present building mostly 13th and 14th century. The impressive tower and spire, built during the 14th century, in the 'Decorated Gothic' style are slightly earlier in date than most of the rest of the exterior of the building, which is largely in the



'Perpendicular' style. The south doorway and porch date from the 13th century.

Inside, features of interest include the font (c1180), the chancel ceiling (Victorian decoration) and the Holy Trinity Chapel, reputedly financed by Westminster Abbey as a memorial to Simon de Langham (Archbishop of Canterbury, who died in 1370). There are famous 14th century carved capitals atop the columns of the nave, showing animals, birds, figures, foliage, Adam and Eve, the Annunciation and the Coronation of the Virgin Mary. There is also a fine Green Man.

**Special Features:** Fine 14th century tower and spire, 14th century carved capitals

**Bells:** 8 - renewed after 1660, recast by Gilbert & Johnson 1910

**Places to Eat/Drink:** In the heart of the Town, Market days - Weds and Sat

**Public Transport:** Rail, bus and road links

**Church Open:** Daily from Morning to Evening Prayer. Lunchtime concerts Weds 1.30 pm in term time  
Parish Office Tel: 01572 724007



## ST. MARY'S

### Greetham

Greetham, a pleasant linear village of limestone houses, lies between Oakham and the A1. It is situated on the 'Viking Way' - a long distance footpath linking Oakham with the Humber Estuary. The splendid tower and spire of Saint Mary's Parish Church is a notable local landmark.

The church building, mainly from the 12th-15th centuries, is situated in a quiet corner of the village. Inside,



**Special Feature:** Early rustic carved panelling

**Bells:** 6

**Places to Eat/Drink:** 3 public houses - The Plough, The Black Horse and The Wheatshaf

**Public Transport:** Rutland Flyer bus from Oakham (Somerfield) every 2 hours, Mon-Sat, 8am - 6pm

**Church Open:** Daily (but altar brass not on display)



## ST. MARY OF THE VIRGIN

### Morcott

The Church stands on the site of an ancient Norman structure and contains part of the original building, dating from soon after the Conquest (1066) to the early part of Stephen's reign (1138). The building was restored and alterations were made about 1320, with further alterations taking place in 1874.

The chief points of interest include the tower, with its unusual ancient aperture or 'pancake window' giving light and air to the belfry, the Tower Arch, featuring a carving of two serpents - each with its tail in the



other's mouth - symbolic of eternity, the nave, which is the most perfect example of Norman work in the area and the Jacobean pulpit, dating from the 1600s.

**Special Features:** Norman arch and pancake window

**Bells:** 4


**Places to Eat/Drink:** The White Horse

**Public Transport:** Buses from Uppingham, Stamford, Peterborough and Leicester


**Church Open:** Key Available




**Key:**

 Further information/guidebook available inside church.

 For up-to-date Bus Service information contact 'Traveline' on 0870 608 2608.  
www.traveline.org.uk

 Visiting Bell Ringers are welcome to ring the bells (by arrangement).

 Railway Station.

**Contacts for further information:**

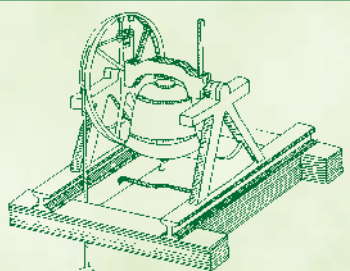
**Rutland County Museum & Visitor Centre,**  
Catmose Street, Oakham, Rutland.  
Tel: 01572 758 441.  
Email: museum@rutland.gov.uk

**Rutland Water Tourist Information Centre,** Sykes Lane Car Park, Rutland Water, LE15 8PX. Tel: 01572 653 026.  
Email: tic@anglianwater.co.uk

**Rutland Visitor Guide** (featuring accommodation)  
[www.gorutland.com](http://www.gorutland.com)

**Leicester Tourist Information Centre**  
7-9, Every Street, Town Hall Square, Leicester, LE1 6AG. Tel: 0906 2941113 (calls charged at 25p per minute)

**Leicestershire Visitors Guide** (featuring accommodation)  
[www.goleicestershire.com](http://www.goleicestershire.com)



**Bells**

Bells are a traditional means of attracting attention and giving warning, so its not surprising that the Christian church chose bells to call its people to worship. The Middle Ages saw the curfew bell rung to warn people to put out fires. Parish churches usually have at least one bell and were used to ring out the hours. Today peals of bells can be heard at weddings and single bells at funerals.

The Rutland Church Trail has been produced with financial support from the Welland SSP and the Churches contained within the leaflet. Whilst every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained within this publication is accurate, none of the organisations involved in its preparation can accept responsibility in respect of any error, misunderstanding or alteration which may have occurred. Visitors are therefore advised to verify details before planning a visit.

