

## Becoming a *Friend of St. Mary's*

I would like to become a *Friend* to ensure that this beautiful building stands for another 900 years and continues to meet the needs of the whole community of Bottesford and beyond.

### Personal Details

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Post Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership Fees

- Individual £15
- Couple £25
- Family £30

*(Up to 2 adults and 2 children under 16)*

I enclose cash/cheque (made payable to *Friends of St. Mary's Bottesford*) for \_\_\_\_\_

If you would like to subscribe through a Standing Order with your bank, please tick here [  ].

### Gift Aid

I am a UK taxpayer intending tax to be reclaimed on my subscription made under the Gift Aid scheme. Please tick here [  ].

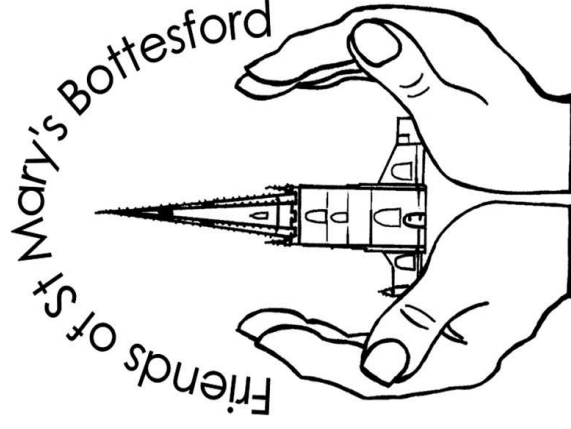
### Please send this form to:

Secretary to 'The Friends',  
St. Mary's Church,  
Rectory Lane, Bottesford,  
Nottingham, NG13 0DA.

# Friends of St Mary's Bottesford

The 'Friends' is a charity whose funds are used solely for the maintenance, beautification and upkeep of this Grade 1 Listed building and its churchyard. It organises a variety of fund-raising events such as exhibitions, concerts and lectures, and promotes the tourist potential of St. Mary's through literature, historical evenings and tours.

The main way that you can support the 'Friends' is by becoming 'a Friend'. As well as contributing to the funds of the charity, your annual membership will entitle you to discounts at Friends' events. Please remember that membership is for anyone who cares about the future of the church building, of whatever faith or none, and those who subscribe do not have to be members of the Church of England.



*Celebrating the Past,  
Enjoying the Present,  
Securing the Future.*



## Church History and Architecture

St. Mary's Parish Church, Bottesford, known affectionately as 'The Lady of the Vale', is the tallest and largest village church in Leicestershire. Standing on the site of Old Beekingthorpe Church, parts of the present building date from the late 12<sup>th</sup> century. Bottesford is indeed fortunate to possess one of the most interesting and appealing churches for miles around, graced with cornices, pinnacles, niches, corbels and gargoyle. Many a cathedral would be proud to exhibit a similar procession of tombs and monuments, reflecting the close historical connection between St. Mary's and the Earls of Rutland. This significant collection, one of the finest to be found in England, helps us trace our national history from the crusades to the Tudor and Stuart dynasties.

## The Church Today

St. Mary's is home to a congregation who express their Christian faith through regular worship and service. St. Mary's also 'belongs' in all sorts of ways to everyone in the local community. Most folk living in Bottesford see it each day, towering above them, and its magnificent spire is an emblem for the village. Many stroll through its peaceful churchyard or pop in for a few minutes of peace and quiet reflection. Some mark the most significant times in their lives through church baptisms, weddings and funerals. Large numbers celebrate the great festivals of Christmas and Easter and gather at key times in the year such as Harvest and Remembrance. And so, as well as being an historical and architectural gem, St. Mary's is a 'living building' for both church and community today.



## The Church in the Future

St. Mary's has stood at the heart of Bottesford for nearly 900 years and it is unthinkable that it could stand dark and closed. But in the longer term this is a real possibility if its finances are not properly secured through the shared efforts of both church and community. As St. Mary's is the home of the regular congregation, day to day running costs are rightly the responsibility of church members. However, as St. Mary's belongs as well to the whole of Bottesford and beyond, it is surely right for that wider community to share in the maintenance of this much loved building. And so please support the work of the 'Friends of St. Mary's Bottesford' to help ensure that this beautiful building stands for another 900 years and continues to meet the needs of the whole community for generations to come.