



The Benefices of  
**The Church of the Good Shepherd,  
Borough Green**  
and  
**St. Mary the Virgin,  
Platt**



**This is an exciting opportunity to help lead two churches in seeking God's path in a beautiful corner of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.**

**As two parishes begin a hope-filled new chapter working towards being a united benefice, we seek a compassionate and visionary priest-in-charge to lead us forward. Rooted in worship and fellowship, our two friendly and welcoming parishes look forward to growing faith across all generations, deepening our mission, and serving our communities together with hope and purpose.**

**With God's help are you the person called to lead us?**

## **Some local context**

Borough Green and St. Mary's Platt are neighbouring parishes with the churches only one mile apart. Both parishes have separate civic councils; however, whilst maintaining separate identities, there is a recognised overlap between the two communities. Both benefices fell vacant in 2025 and have spent the past months prayerfully exploring the possibility of working more closely together. The appointment of a priest-in-charge to serve both parishes offers a chance to make the most of the rich opportunities for ministry and mission available in the two communities.

The split of time between the two parishes will be 0.5 for Borough Green and 0.5 for St. Mary's, Platt. There is a readiness in both churches to explore ways of working together more closely and to seek God's guidance as to how a future pattern of ministry might develop.

# Further local context

You will see from the individual profiles that the two benefices comprise two similar but diverse churches with different histories but thriving communities:



**The Church of the Good Shepherd in Borough Green offers a welcoming, inclusive ministry in a large bustling village. We have a keenness to explore worship styles and grow our work with children, schools and families.**

**St Mary's in the rural village of Platt has a very active congregation which is encouraging and supporting younger families within the church and its school. We are seeking to increase our outreach and grow our community.**

**Individual profiles outlining the ministry and mission of each church offer more detail alongside this overview.**

The two churches are distinct in their style and outlook but share a common goal of seeing God at work in their villages and using their strengths to bring God's kingdom to the communities they serve. They offer a unique blend of traditional and contemporary worship styles, with opportunities for growth and community engagement.

As priest-in-charge here, you will have the support of experienced lay ministers, readers and dedicated volunteers across both churches. You'll also benefit from being part of the Shoreham Deanery within the Diocese of Rochester. A sample pattern of worship is included which has been put together by the two churches and illustrates their willingness to work together for the benefit of all. Recent examples of this include two combined Lent and Easter services in 2026.

# A message from the Archdeacon of Tonbridge

Borough Green and Platt are two parishes sharing a common sense of purpose and a genuine desire to grow God's kingdom in their corner of West Kent. Both fell vacant in 2025 and after a history of working together in a local cluster, they have been actively praying and preparing for the possibility of coming together as a joint benefice. If appointed, you will help lead two distinct parishes in their mission and ministry while helping them discern the possibilities of a new shared life together.

At Borough Green you will find a church that is keen to reach out to its community through a wide variety of activities — a foodbank, children's work, warm-space mornings, and more — with committed lay teams and a congregation eager to grow. At Platt, the church is deeply rooted in a smaller, tightly-knit village community and is richly resourced in its active robed choir, strong school links, two Lay Ministers and parish magazine delivered to every door. The congregation is genuinely embedded in the life of Platt and is excited for the future.

Both parishes are keen to work together and to find a new and shared future. Bringing them closer will require pastoral sensitivity, collaborative leadership, and an ability to work through change and find common ground.

We are praying for the right person to help these two communities discover what they can become together.

*The Ven. Nick Cornell, Archdeacon of Tonbridge*

# The Opportunity

## Who are we looking for?

You will:

- Be a missional leader prepared to work across two (currently separate) Benefices.
- Have a rich and rooted spiritual life.
- Have experience of managing and leading through a period of change.
- Be a good communicator, able to nurture faith, engage and connect with people of different generations, stages of faith and gifts; ensuring their involvement in worship and parish life.
- Be able to minister across the range of liturgical traditions we offer as well as reach people in new ways. Leading inspiring worship and prayer, encouraging participation and creativity.
- Be a good team leader and builder, to God's glory - knowing when to cast vision, when to encourage and how to develop people's gifts. Respect and support the diversity of the two churches while exploring closer ways of working together, sharing resources and supporting joint initiatives.
- Take an active role in the life of our villages and have warmth, empathy, and approachability in pastoral care.
- Have a ministry among young and old, strengthening links with our village schools.
- Grow, develop and work collaboratively with lay leaders, willing to delegate and build on existing good foundations.

## What can we offer?

- We have safe, warm and welcoming church communities.
- We have supportive ministry teams including lay ministers & readers, enthusiastic children's work volunteers and a parish administrator as well as many active lay members keen to serve and grow.
- We are keen to pray for you and work with you in discerning God's vision for our communities.
- We are committed to valuing your personal well-being and recognise your need for rest, retreat and personal growth.
- We have well-established governance structures in both churches.
- Well maintained buildings.
- There are smooth-running teams for planning worship, and for organising children's work and Bible Study / Homegroups.
- You will have a large and well-kept Vicarage within walking distance of the centre of Borough Green

# Our Communities

Both villages are located roughly 30 miles southeast of Central London, with easy access to the rest of Kent via the M20 and further afield on the M26/M25. Borough Green and Wrotham railway station provides a straightforward train service to London

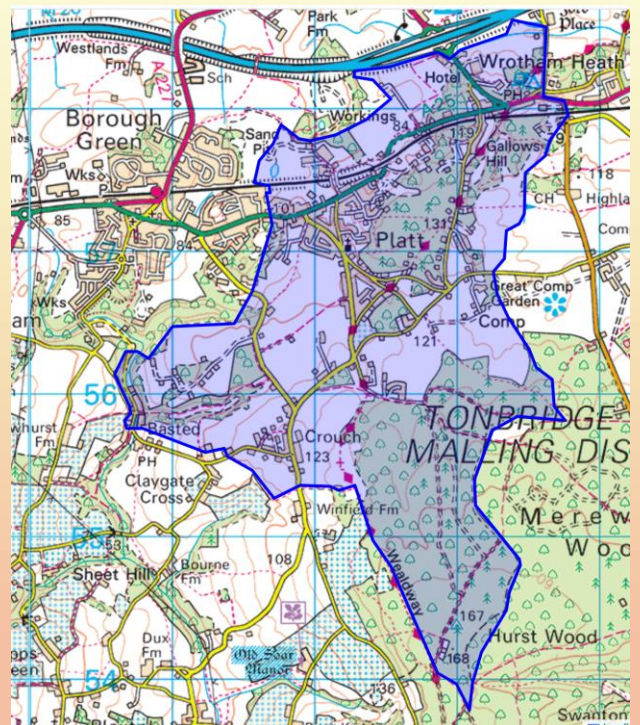
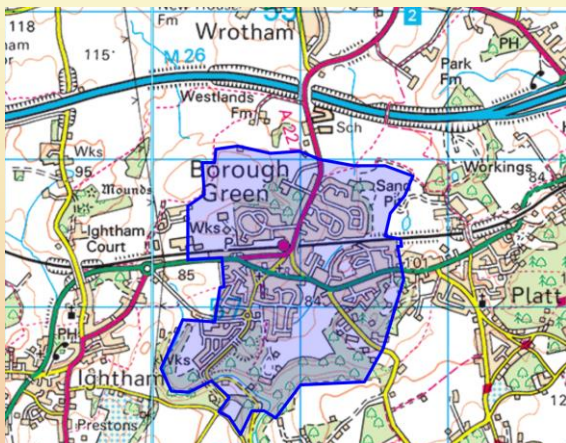
Victoria and Charing Cross taking only 45 minutes, or Ashford, Canterbury and the coast, travelling in the other direction. There are also bus services to neighbouring towns such as Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Maidstone.

These villages are perfectly positioned to enjoy rural tranquillity while having easy access to the amenities of larger towns such as Sevenoaks, Maidstone and London. Public transport links between the villages are more limited, and you will need to be able to move between the two villages and churches, including in the evenings and weekends.

The area is well-served educationally, with good local primary schools and two secondary schools in nearby Wrotham, one of which is a specialist provision for those with autism. There is also easy access to additional state and grammar secondary schools of Maidstone, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells.

The area is ideal for those who want a balance of rural living with good connections to town life and wider transportation networks.

## Parish maps



**Borough Green** fosters a close-knit community and, with a population of around 4,700, it is the smallest parish by area in Kent. However, it boasts the highest population density in the Tonbridge and Malling Borough, offering a vibrant atmosphere. It acts as a hub for several neighbouring villages with its local amenities including a village hall, medical centre, pharmacy, shops, post office, restaurants, takeaways, pubs, coffee shops, hairdressers and funeral directors.

In addition to a recreation ground with a children's play area and two sports grounds, the surrounding countryside invites exploration. Featuring a mix of farmland and woodland, alongside a network of scenic footpaths, it is perfect for leisurely walks or bike rides.

Borough Green offers a safe, welcoming environment with excellent schools, community facilities and travel connectivity, making it a good place to live.



The cosy, peaceful village of **St Mary's Platt** sits halfway between Maidstone and Sevenoaks in rural Kent and is home to around 1,800 people. The church stands at the centre of the lively, friendly community and backs onto Platt Woods, a 42-acre public open space valued and appreciated by all. The parish enjoys excellent road and rail connections.

Local amenities include a welcoming pub, a village hall, two sports fields, a children's play area, a dedicated dog-walking area and a cricket pitch.

The parish is more than the village that bears its name. It extends to the hamlets of Wrotham Heath, Comp, Nepicar and Crouch (said 'Crooch', no-one really knows why). Just like the boundary between Platt and Borough Green, the boundaries between the village and the hamlets are blurred. Though the area of the parish looks large, there are very few houses in the southern part which is mostly woodland. There is a small industrial estate and there are pockets of new development. We always welcome new residents into parish life.





# The Vicarage

The vicarage is only a short walk from the bustling centre of Borough Green, where there are ample amenities and transport links. The Church of the Good Shepherd is a couple of minutes' walk away, with St. Mary's in Platt only a twenty-minute walk, but less than a 5-minute drive away.



Set back from the road, the detached house offers:

- Four bedrooms
- Three reception rooms
- Downstairs toilet and washroom.
- Family bathroom
- Newly built garage
- Electric car charging point
- Plenty of parking at the front
- A good-sized garden mainly laid to lawn at the rear.

# A sample combined rota

Sundays	Borough Green	St. Mary's Platt
Week 1	8.30 Said Communion 10.00 All Age Worship (in house team)	10.30 Sung Communion incorporating Soul Sessions Youth Group, followed by refreshments
Week 2	10.00 Holy Communion and Children's Church followed by refreshments	10.30 Family Service (in house team)
Week 3	8.30 Said Communion & Breakfast Church	10.30 Sung Communion incorporating Splatt! children's group, followed by refreshments
Week 4	10.00 Holy Communion and Children's Church followed by refreshments	10.30 Morning Worship (in house team)
Week 5 *		
		Wednesdays 9.30 Holy Communion

*\*On 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday, we try to meet together with the other two churches in our local cluster – the Benefice of St. Peter's Church, Ightham and St. George's Church, Wrotham – to share a communion service, taking it in turn to host. Other occasional services such as Advent Carol Service and Ash Wednesday are also similarly shared.*

Both congregations understand the difficulties of running multiple concurrent services. We all would like our new priest to have time after services to chat and get to know us. This is only a suggestion of a rota for our combined churches. We expect to work with our new priest to develop a sustainable pattern of worship once they have settled into their new role.

**We hope this summary has sparked your curiosity and inspired you to explore the rich opportunities—and meaningful challenges—that await our future priest.**

**Please browse our individual profiles for more detailed information about each church.**

**Church of the Good Shepherd,  
Borough Green**

**St. Mary the Virgin,  
St. Mary's Platt**

