

THE CANONRY BENEFICE PROFILE 2023

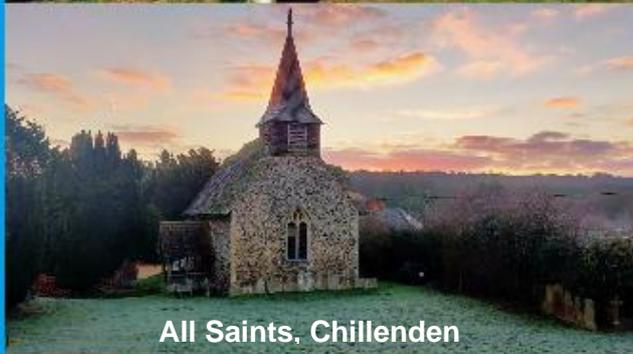
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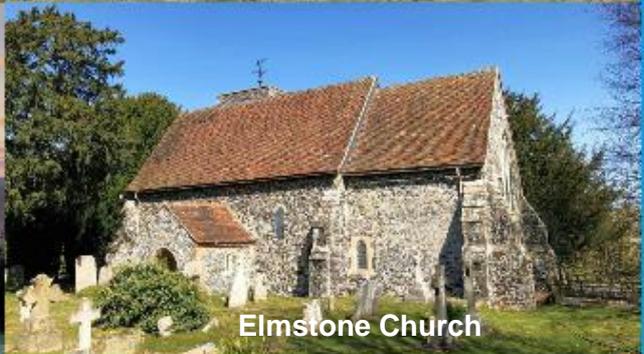
St Nicholas, Ash



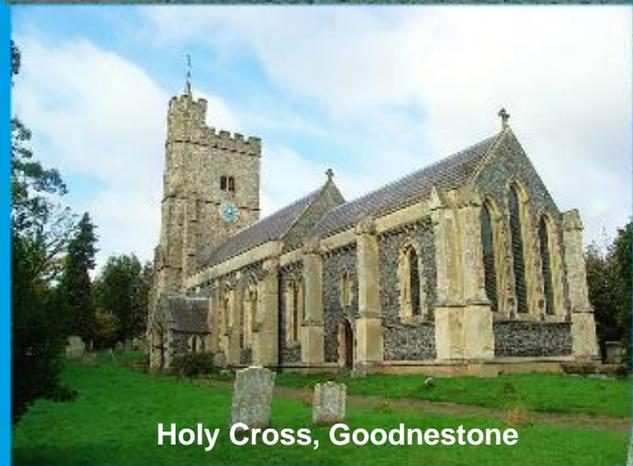
St Mildred, Preston



All Saints, Chillenden



Elmstone Church

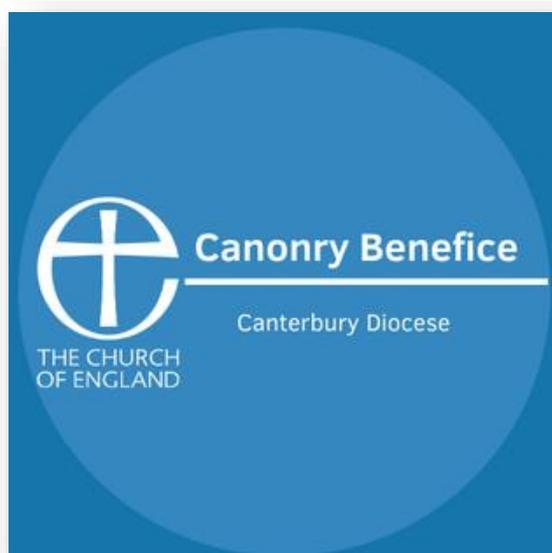


Holy Cross, Goodnestone



St Mary, Nonington

The Canonry Benefice – Benefice Profile 2023



**Joyfully proclaiming the love and majesty of
God in worship and outreach**

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Introduction

The setting

The Canonry Benefice is a united benefice formed in 2012 within the East Bridge Deanery of the Diocese of Canterbury. In its model of one full-time priest for the Benefice, as well as lay officers and authorised ministers, it offers a realistic pattern for mission and ministry and addresses the costs of maintaining ministry in each parish within the Deanery. The Benefice comprises six active churches, two 'festival churches' and five PCCs.

The Benefice is located midway between Canterbury and Dover, approximately 12 miles from each, and 5 miles from the coastal towns of Sandwich and Deal. The Benefice straddles the boundary between Canterbury and Dover District Councils and currently lies in the parliamentary constituency of South Thanet (however the parliamentary boundary will change in 2024 to become Herne Bay & Sandwich). The area is predominantly rural comprising small, isolated hamlets and the larger villages of Ash, and Wingham, although that is not in the Benefice. There are good public transport bus and train services including the high-speed train into London St Pancras from Ramsgate and Canterbury. The Channel Tunnel terminal at Folkestone and the ferry Port of Dover are each about 30 minutes' drive away.

The parishes of the Canonry Benefice cluster around the two largest churches namely Ash, together with Elmstone and Preston in the north and Goodnestone, together Chillenden and Nonington in the south. All five parishes have grown and flourished together within the Benefice over the last eleven years and have been working harmoniously ever since. With the previous incumbent Vicar, we have jointly developed a fully functioning, self-sufficient, financially stable Benefice. We have created ministry and organisational structures which are appropriate and proportionate for the communities they serve. We work together at benefice level where that is needed, sharing talents skills and resources with each other, whilst maintaining the individual character that each community needs with local responsibility and commitment to the care of buildings and provision for worship.

Aims & Objectives

In harmony with our mission statement, “*Joyfully proclaiming the love and majesty of God in worship and outreach*”, we desire to know this love and majesty for ourselves.

Our aims and objectives for the Benefice are to...

- enable as many people as possible to worship in our churches and to become part of their parish communities.
- learn about the gospels and develop knowledge and trust in Jesus
- maintain an overview of worship throughout the parishes and make suggestions on how services might put worship and faith into practice through prayer, scripture, music and sacrament.
- provide a wide range of services to enable as many people as possible to worship within our churches at a time to suit them.
- provide pastoral care, with the help of the incumbent, to people living in the parishes.
- facilitate a wider use of the church buildings for use by the community for example for school services, as a meeting space, for presentations and concerts, bell ringing, etc.
- continue to assist each parish to maintain its finances so that the benefice share of diocesan expenses is met.
- maintain the fabric of our church buildings.
- be there when we are needed.

Safeguarding

The Canonry Benefice is committed to providing a safe environment for everyone in our communities and we will adhere to the House of Bishops Safeguarding Policy. Each Parish and PCC has access to a nominated local Safeguarding Officer. All the PCCs have formally adopted the Safeguarding Policy and every member of each PCC has undertaken as a minimum the basic level training required. Records of training and qualifications held are maintained by our Benefice Administrator.

Administration

The Benefice is fortunate to employ a highly motivated and enthusiastic part time administrator, who takes care of the vast majority of the administrative functions for the whole Benefice, including organising weddings, clergy rota, website maintenance and is the single point of contact for the Diocese.

The Benefice has a newly created and unifying website which acts as a portal to access each of the churches and parishes: www.thecanorybenefice.org.uk

The image displays two overlapping screenshots of the Canonry Benefice website. The top screenshot shows the homepage with a blue header containing navigation links: HOME, ABOUT US, OUR CHURCHES, HIRE OUR CHURCH, and CONTACT US. Below the header is a green banner with the mission statement: "Joyfully proclaiming the love and majesty of God in worship and outreach". The main content area features a large aerial photograph of a church and its surrounding area. To the left of the photo, the text reads "THE CANONRY BENEFICE" and "We represent seven churches in East Kent, each with the endeavour to be a community space and support for all villagers and visitors. In addition to weekly services for those who wish, we also provide support to local schools and groups as well as a public and private event venue". Below this text are two yellow buttons: "FIND YOUR CHURCH" and "LATEST PEW SHEET".

The bottom screenshot shows a "COMMUNITY EVENTS" section with three featured cards: "MARRIAGES", "FUNERALS", and "BAPTISMS". Each card includes a small image, a title, a brief description, and a yellow button for further action (e.g., "Make an Enquiry", "Request Support", "Ask for Details"). Below this is a "NEWS & RESOURCES" section with a background image of a church building. It contains several white boxes with links: "View this week's Pew Sheet" (with a "Pew Sheet" button), "View our latest newsletter" (with a "Benefice Briefing" button), "Canterbury Diocese & Resources" (with a "Visit Website" button), "Church of England & Resources" (with a "Visit CoE Website" button), and "Access our Youtube Channel" (with a "Youtube Channel" button).

The footer of the website is dark grey and contains contact information, a cookie policy notice, and logos for "THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND", "ECO CHURCH", and "Diocese of Canterbury CHANGED LIVES @ CHANGING LIVES". There is also a "Subscribe to Our Newsletter" button.

RECTOR OF THE CANONRY BENEFICE

A Message from the Bishop of Dover



Welcome and thank you for taking an interest in the role of Rector of the Canonry Benefice. You will see from the parish profile some of the specific things that the parish is looking for – and a little of what the team here hopes the future may look like. Of course, a key part of your discernment process in coming to this role will be gaining a sense of the bigger picture of us as a diocesan family, our vision, and priorities for the future.

Who we are.

Founded in 597 by St Augustine, Canterbury Diocese is the oldest diocese in England and has a special place in the life of the national and worldwide Church. With its iconic Cathedral it forms a focal point for the life of the whole Anglican Communion, offering a spiritual home and place of pilgrimage for people from every nation and walk of life.

Kent is renowned as the ‘Garden of England’ and this rural heart is core to our identity – yet the communities we serve are very diverse. Our Diocese stretches from Maidstone to Thanet, from the Isle of Sheppey to the Romney Marsh. We have 350 miles of coastline with historic ports and seaside resorts, alongside rural communities, market towns and commuter-belt urban developments. Affluent areas often sit alongside pockets of major deprivation, offering an exciting and challenging mission context.

Our vision

By God’s grace we want to be a people who are...

- ...confident & creative disciples of Jesus Christ
- ...rooted in scripture & drenched in prayer
- ...living gratefully, giving generously, caring for creation & sharing the gospel
- ...growing in number & expectations – of God & ourselves
- ...motivated by justice & love, open to the Spirit & ready for adventure! **Therefore, we will...**

'Therefore, we will...' is a recognition that words without actions are empty. It is a commitment to taking real steps now to make this vision a reality soon. The current actions that flow from this



vision are outlined in our current strategy document [which you can find here](#). Of course, these actions will change and develop over time - and it's exciting that some of our parishes are already considering this vision carefully for themselves, exploring together what actions they will commit to take, what their local 'Therefore we will...' might look like.

At the heart of all we do is this vision: a vision of transformation for ourselves and our communities: *Changed Lives → Changing Lives*. In your role, in your place, we will be looking for you to join in with what God is already doing and play a crucial part in making this vision a reality.

Our direction

Our vision unites us in purpose but will be expressed in different ways according to what makes sense for different parts of our diocesan family. We are working closely with our deaneries to identify, resource and support them as they seek to grow their mission, ministry – and their churches – in ways that make sense to their contexts. Each deanery is developing its own mission plans - and you could play a key role in helping to develop your deanery's their vision for the future.

As a diocesan family, we are also deeply committed to our calling to build a safer, more welcoming church for all. We will never be perfect, but we can work together to make our churches safer. At the heart of this ethos is the conviction that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility - and that it needs to be at the heart of everything we do. You can find out more about our approach to safeguarding [here](#).

Our commitment to you

We know that supporting healthy, flourishing ministers (lay and ordained) is crucial for a healthy, flourishing diocese. Therefore, we offer the 'Canterbury Diet' to all our new incumbent ministers – this is an intentional programme for ministerial development, health, growth, and faith. A similar lay programme is in development too. We offer pastoral supervision and spiritual accompaniment, an invitation to be part of residential training programmes focused on learning, leading and mission, action learning sets, as well as a range of specialised training events, and other regular opportunities for growth in prayer and spirituality.

In short, I hope that you will be as excited by our vision, priorities, and opportunities as we are. Be assured of our prayers as you consider your next step in ministry.

+ Rose

The Rt Revd Rose Hudson Wilkin
Bishop of Dover and Bishop in Canterbury



Diocese of Canterbury
CHANGED LIVES → CHANGING LIVES



**A MESSAGE FROM THE ARCHDEACON OF CANTERBURY AND
THE
AREA DEAN OF EAST BRIDGE**

Thank you for your interest in the post of Vicar of the Canonry Benefice. The benefice is in a beautiful part of the East Kent countryside not far from the coast. The five parishes that comprise the benefice are working well together in a reasonably new configuration. They are developing a strong joint identity as well as maintaining the individual identity of the villages and churches. There are challenges, as there are everywhere in the church, not least with numbers and finances, but there is great scope for growth and a motivated team of people ready to join with a new incumbent in promoting this.

East Bridge Deanery is made up of four, largely rural, benefices and includes within it the expanding former mining village of Aylesham. The deanery clergy are collaborative and supportive, and an appointment is in the process of being made to the other vacant benefice in the deanery (which abuts Canonry). There will therefore be a strong functioning team of five stipendiary incumbent-status clergy in the deanery which will bring with it opportunities for co-operation, collaboration, and mutual support. Therefore, we are looking for a colleague who will be ready both to give and receive support. Bishop Rose's introduction has highlighted the support that the Diocese of Canterbury offers to its clergy through the 'Canterbury Diet'. The Living Well (which is the Canterbury Diocesan Centre for Healing and Wellness) is situated in the former vicarage at Nonington within the Canonry Benefice.

Please be assured of our prayers as you consider an application. It's a great benefice with lovely people: there is a job to do and bags of potential.

With best wishes

The Venerable Dr Will Adam

Archdeacon of Canterbury

The Reverend Stefan Thomas

Area Dean of East Bridge

Vacancy for Vicar

Personal attributes – we would like our new Vicar to

- Actively and visibly engage and communicate with the diverse rural community in each of the parishes, understand and embrace the context of each parish and reach across all ages, backgrounds, and denominations.
- Be inspired with strong faith to bring leadership of God's word to the people of the Canonry Benefice.
- Be energetically able to embrace the broad traditions of worship style of the Church of England with the flexibility to recognise the individual needs of each parish.

Our vision – we want our Benefice to be.....

- Kind, safe, open, all embracing, inclusive and outward reaching.
- A place where everyone is listened to, valued, recognised, and encouraged on or introduced to their journey with God.
- A growing Christian community with a heart for outreach and a wish for good relationships to attract families and people of all ages.

The challenges we have.....

- To increase outreach and pastoral care
- To continue to be financially resilient, innovative and flexible
- To sustain growth within our church community by engaging with a wider segment of the local rural population

Ash Vicarage

The vicarage is a generously sized family home, with six-bedrooms (one with en-suite facilities), a double garage, 2 reception rooms and a sizable study which is often used for meetings. It was built around 50 years ago. It is within five minutes walking distance of St. Nicholas Church, the village centre, the doctor's surgery, and easy walking distance to the village primary schools. There is a large well stocked garden which is used for parish events and functions. There is a shed and summerhouse and the property backs onto the Recreation Ground and allotments. There is a very good broadband connection which is adequate for live streaming of services. It is a good place to raise a family.



Church Buildings and Finances

Working together to manage our finances

The finances of Canonry benefice are in a decent position, considering recent headwinds. We believe our way of working brings the best of accountability at parish level and benefice collaboration to meet commitments asked of us. The treasurers work closely together in a spirit of generosity and sharing.

Each parish has its own financial characteristics, for example:

- Ash and Elmstone and Preston each benefit from sizeable endowments.
- Goodnestone and Preston generate significant income from weddings.
- Chillenden enjoys relatively low heating and maintenance costs but has a church hall to maintain.

We each maintain our finances independently and have managed to broadly match income and expenditure. Critical to this in 2022 and planned for 2023 was agreement that Ash would over-pay its assessed parish share, matching under-payments by Chillenden and Nonington.

Our unique process involves an open-book approach, understanding each other's challenges with each parish bidding what it felt it could afford. The Treasurers meet several times a year, feeding back to PCCs and the Benefice Forum.

Parishes have developed their approaches to fund-raising and shared experiences, with recent innovations include:

- A monthly Happy Hour at Nonington following the lead of Elmstone.
- A 100 Club draw at Chillenden which will cover the annual running costs of the Church Hall. Other parishes are looking at this with interest.
- Deployment of electronic devices for cash transfers

"My congratulations to all in Canonry for the mature way in which you have worked together to adjust the Parish Share between you for 2023.

These are difficult times for each Parish and it is good to see this sort of example being worked through. I'm sure that this constructive approach will work for you this year."

Mike Gallagher
Deanery Treasurer
February 2023

Our costs and income

It costs about £120,000 a year to keep our five parishes running, including about £80,000 contributions in parish shares. We generate about the same level of regular income, resulting in a broadly break-even position. Around half the income comes from regular giving and half from other sources, the mix and make-up varying significantly between the parishes.

In addition to these regular costs the parishes fund (from various sources) and incur capital spend, both to develop our facilities for the 21st century and to preserve the rich fabric we have inherited. Recent examples include:

- Over £100,000 restoring the needle spire of St Nicholas. It was used as a sea-mark until the 19th century
- Some £95,000 re-ordering St Mary Nonington, including installing a kitchen and toilets to widen accessibility and usage.

Our finances are well managed and kept under regular review, but this does not mean things are easy. We will welcome our new Vicar providing guidance and support to us on financial matters as we seek to accomplish our broader goals.

Parish Finances (£)	Ash	Chillenden	Elmstone & Preston	Goodnestone	Nonington	Total for Benefice
2022						
Ordinary Receipts						
General giving	45,616	6,974	10,415	15,037	8,748	86,790
Fees	3,019	949	5,757	3,940	996	14,661
Other income	13,491	1,021	10,372	1,927	847	27,658
Sub totals	62,126	8,944	26,544	20,904	10,591	129,109
Ordinary Payments						
Parish share	40,648	4,815	13,017	11,800	4,200	74,480
Clergy & staff costs	6,258	460	1,178	869	292	9,057
Mission giving & donations	64	380	700	0	45	1,189
General running costs	24,388	1,879	10,826	7,898	3,859	48,850
Sub totals	71,358	7,534	25,721	20,567	8,396	133,576
Ordinary Surplus/(deficit)	-9,232	1,410	823	337	2,195	-4,467
Extraordinary transactions						
Unrestricted receipts	3,715	0	0	0	0	3,715
Restricted receipts	24,118	0	0	0	0	24,118
Unrestricted payment	24,115	1,579	5,142	0	0	30,836
Restricted payments	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Surplus/(deficit)	-5,514	-169	-4,319	337	2,195	-7,470
Assets & Liabilities						
Unrestricted assets	15,142	8,662	94,311	12,208	6,339	136,662
Restricted assets	107,564	580	220,749	12,710	0	341,603
Total net assets	122,706	9,242	315,060	24,918	6,339	478,265

East Bridge Deanery

The East Bridge Deanery consists of 22 churches which are currently grouped into four Benefices: Barham Downs, Bridge, Little Stour and our Canonry Benefice. It covers an area that is almost entirely rural. The Parish of Aylesham, a former coal mining village that has expanded in recent years as a commuter/dormitory area, has been receiving funds from the Church Commissioners as part of their Mission programme. Aylesham is in the process of moving from being a stand-alone parish within the East Bridge Deanery to being part of the Barham Downs Benefice.

The Deanery Synod meets regularly, along with various committees, including a “Ministry & Mission” Committee which has been working on developing our strategy. There is a Clergy Chapter which meets regularly, and collaboration and mutual support between clergy and churches are given a high priority. New colleagues are encouraged to make involvement in the life of the Deanery a priority.

One of the three annual Deanery Synods has in recent years included a finance presentation by the Diocese. This is a Synod that is open to all members of the PCCs in the Deanery and this “Finance Roadshow” helps explain to all the parishes the difficult issues around Parish Share and finance generally. This has been a very helpful development in what is a sensitive area.

“We send our greetings to all the Christians in the Canonry benefice and wish to thank you all for your patience and faith in the wait for a new priest. We are especially grateful to churchwardens and all those who maintain and prepare for services and who continue to care for the sick and needy in all the parishes. We think of those who make possible the music and those who generously provide after-service hospitality and those who week by week keep up the communication between the parishes. Without you the witness to Christ in these small communities would be threadbare. Let us pray that a priest will soon hear call to serve amongst you.”

Archbishop Justin Welby & Bishop Rose Hudson-Wilkin
July 2023

Parish Profiles

The profiles of each of the parishes are set out in Appendices A-E. The congregations reflect the broad spectrum of styles of worship and church life found in village communities; they are open to the opportunities of sharing resources and ministry within the Benefice. The current constituent PCCs welcome creative ideas and have among them lay people who are ready to share their varied and many talents and resources to support the clergy and each other not only in terms of maintaining the church buildings, committees and social events, but also technical and professional and creative skills and by contributing through lay ministry.

Summary information for each Parish is given below

Parish Characteristic	Ash	Chillenden	Preston	Elmstone	Goodnestone	Nonington
Church	St Nicholas	All Saints	St Mildred	Dedication unknown	Holy Cross	St Mary
Population	3,365	120	1,200	140	280	700
Electoral Roll	71	19	28	(in Preston)	27	16
Avg Sunday attendance	40	15	34	16	12 (26 with choir)	12
Sunday Services	1 Weekly	1 2 nd & 4 th	1 2 nd	1 1 st & 3 rd	1 1 st & 3 rd	1 1 st & 2 nd
	Single Benefice Service in months with 5 th Sunday – rotates around all churches					
Primary Schools	1 private 1 Aided CofE	No	1	No	1 CofE	1 CofE
Bus services	Daily	None	Daily	None	None	Daily
Train services	Sandwich 4.5 miles	Adisham 2.9 miles	Sandwich 8.0 miles	Sandwich 8.0 miles	Adisham 3.0 miles	Snowdown 1.5 miles
Shops	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No
Pubs	2	1	2	No	1	No
Church Warden	Jacqueline Wilkinson	David Hampson- Ghani	Alison Stone	Alison Stone	Sue Kittle	Paul Willett
Website	Link	Link	Link	Link	Link	Link

Appendix A: The Parish of Ash with Westmarsh

Introduction

The parish of Ash with Westmarsh is situated in East Kent the population in 2011 was 3,365 however there has been significant housing built since then, so the population is likely to be higher.

The parish of Ash is one of the largest villages in Kent, it is mainly rural and consists of the main village centre surrounded by hamlets, the largest of which is Westmarsh.

Church and village



The church of St Nicholas is in The Street in the heart of the village on the ridge.

The village has two food stores, two pubs, a takeaway, and a cafe, also 2 hairdressers, doctors' surgery, chemist, physiotherapist clinic, garage. There is a butcher within the parish and Bed and Breakfast establishments.

There are several clubs and societies that run across a spectrum of typical village activities with an active Heritage centre which is attached to the Village Hall and there are successful units of uniform clubs.

Within the village there are two Primary Schools – the Aided Church of England school (Cartwright and Kelsey) to which the church maintains regular links and a privately run (St Faith's). The church



is significant for both schools and is used for services and events throughout the school year.

Ash is close to Sandwich, Deal and Canterbury with regular bus services, and good train links to London. There are excellent secondary schools in both Sandwich and Canterbury.

St Nicholas Church

St Nicholas Church dates from the 13th century and is in good state of repair, there is currently ongoing repairs to the clock face. The tower contains 10 bells which are rung every Sunday. There is an endowed fabric fund to help with the cost of maintaining the building and an active Friends group who raise funds for improvements to the church building. They organise a major art exhibition each year which acts as a key focus for the parish.

Worship and Church Life



Church life is strong, and the Eucharist is at the heart of our Sunday worship, however we have a more informal service of Morning Worship on the 1st Sunday of the month lead by our reader and supported by the congregation.

We had a very enjoyable Songs of Praise as part of our recent celebration of Queen Elizabeth's Platinum Jubilee.

The average weekly attendance is 40 with larger attendances (approx. 120) at major festivals eg Remembrance and Christingle. The electoral roll is 71.

In the past few years, the choir has rebuilt and is now a strong group under the direction of our organist.

We have a small regular group of flower arrangers.

A small fellowship group lead by a member of the congregation started before the pandemic and has managed to continue throughout providing support and Christian fellowship for each other.

We have held lent discussions in the church.

We are registered for Eco church and have been awarded a bronze medal.

There is a small but keen group of volunteers who care for the churchyard and this area is enjoyed by many who live in the village as it is found to be peaceful.

The liturgy follows a form of common worship and various parts of the service are

sung. hymns from common praise and songs for worship are used. The laity is involved with reading the lessons, leading the prayers, and assisting with the administration of Holy Communion.



- We are a family friendly church, new families are always welcome and pre-Covid we ran successful Sunday schools and Messy church.
- The minister is supported by our Reader (Anne Talbert) who also has responsibilities elsewhere in the Benefice.
- Stewardship campaigns have been held to encourage regular giving.
- The Parish Share is paid in full but the congregation works hard to meet the day to day financial commitments.
- The church has an active PCC who meet every other month with nine members

Regular services

1st Sunday of the month, 10.30am	Morning worship
2nd, 3rd, 4th Sunday, 10.30am	Holy Communion

Coffee is served after the 10.30am Sunday services to encourage fellowship amongst the congregation and to extend a welcome to new people.

Outreach and Church Activities

Parents bringing their children for baptism are visited to encourage stronger links with the church, they are also encouraged to attend services prior to the baptism. All baptisms are within the Sunday service so they can be welcomed by the church family.

- An annual memorial service open to all who have suffered bereavement - usually held 3rd Sunday in November in the afternoon.
- Marriage preparation sessions are provided with St Nicholas Church hosting an annual preparation day at the start of the year for all couples intending to marry in one of the Benefice churches during that year.
- The PCC endeavours to maintain its charitable giving through special collections and fund-raising activities.
- Christian Aid coffee morning held in the village hall as part of the monthly village coffee mornings.
- Harvest festival, food collected for Salvation Army.
- Remembrance service, retiring collection is collected for Royal British Legion.
- St Nicholas day gifts are given for a local charity supporting pregnant young women who are vulnerable.
- Christingle service, collection is given to The Children's society.
- For Harvest goods and St Nicholas gifts the doors of the church are open so the whole community can give.
- St Nicholas Church is a collection point for the Deal Food bank and this is very well supported by the village
- A book stall has been set up within the church for church funds and has proved popular for the congregation, visitors to the church and the wider village.

The church is hired for concerts which are enjoyed by many.

There is a monthly Parish magazine with news of the church and other community organisations. This reaches many homes in the village and is also found in the library at the village hall, it provides an opportunity for outreach. The magazine is also online.

The church is open to all every day to allow for private prayer and other visitors and we are very grateful to those who open and shut the church to allow this to happen.



Appendix B: The Parish of Chillenden with Knowlton

Introduction



Chillenden is a small rural hamlet of 46 houses and approximately 120 people, including 14 children. The tiny Norman Church of All Saints sits at the heart of this community which also includes a separate church hall, a thriving pub and restaurant, a historic windmill, and a working farm. Most of the village is designated as a conservation area and there

are a number of fine Kentish houses. The majority of residents are working or retired.

Church and village

The congregation is a friendly and dynamic group who have turned around the fortunes of this church. With a big community effort all round average numbers attending our twice-monthly service peaked at well over 20 (with up to 100 attending other special services such as the annual Carol Service) having fallen to negligible levels in the mid-2000s. Following the pandemic numbers are nearer 15 and one of our challenges is to encourage others to join or return.



The equally small and beautiful church of St. Clement's at Knowlton, which was made redundant in 1991, lies within the parish and we hold the occasional service there.

All Saints' Church is well maintained. There are no outstanding works from the last Quinquennial Review and

the lighting facilities have recently been updated to LED units. The church was completely renovated in 2007, with a small kitchen and a new central heating system installed, and new lighting, plumbing & wiring. The closed churchyard is maintained by Dover District Council.

A fundraising sub-committee of the PCC, the Rainbow Appeal Committee, was re-activated in 2022 to run a well-supported 100 Club lottery in the wider community to raise funds particularly for the church hall. The committee, originally formed in 2003, raised over £100,000 to fund the 2007 works. The church building is now in a sound condition and visitors frequently comment on the warm welcoming atmosphere.



The church hall, which was much improved and renovated with funds raised by the Rainbow Committee, is now used regularly to hold village events and fundraisers and currently is used far more than in the past. The 100 Club lottery will cover the full running costs and, it is hoped, help fund maintenance and improvement of the building.

Worship and Church Life

Chillenden is linked with Goodnestone and there is a close co-operation between the two churches and village communities. Indeed we are all part of the one civil parish of Goodnestone and this also includes the small hamlet of Rowling. This hamlet provides several regular churchgoers at both churches. Services alternate between the churches each month with the 2nd and 4th Sundays at All Saints, Chillenden and the 1st and 3rd at Holy Cross Goodnestone. Services start at 9.00am, enabling a Vicar to move on to other services in the benefice if required.

We have experimented with different forms of liturgy over the years and for some time have regularly used the BCP

communion service. The decision was very much an active one, following experimentation, assessment of numbers and consultation with the church community. It brings a diversity of offering to our benefice and the continuity and familiarity is very popular with the congregation.

Outreach and Church Activities

We have an active and enthusiastic PCC who keep this church at the heart of the village and focus on the future.

The church building is seen as an important part of the village community by many who are not regular worshippers. This is illustrated by the high number of volunteers from across the village who join working parties to help with maintenance at both the church and church hall. We are proud to be a welcoming church which is valued by the community in the pastoral support it gives.

Eco Church

We are active supporters of the Eco Church initiative. Within the last five years areas of the churchyard and the whole of the village hall gardens have been actively managed to encourage wildlife. As well as the clear environmental and amenity benefits this initiative brings it has drawn in members of the community who are not church-goers.



In 2022 we assessed alternatives to our current heating arrangement, including heat pumps and solar panels. The advice is that at this stage

there would be insufficient environmental return to justify the cost. We have though taken the opportunity to increase the energy efficiency of the church lighting and will be considering further opportunities for the hall.

Appendix C: The Parish of Goodnestone

Introduction

Goodnestone is a quintessential rural estate village with history dating back hundreds of years. It is in the heart of the Kent countryside between Canterbury and Sandwich. The village is surrounded by the Goodnestone Park Estate with its beautiful gardens that are open to the public.

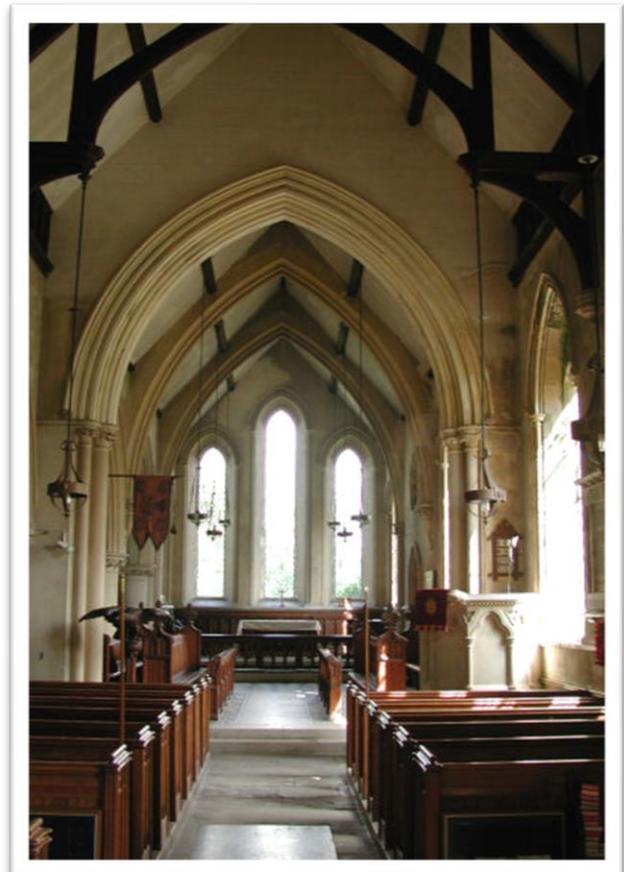


Church and Village

Holy Cross Church, of twelfth century origins, has over recent years benefited by a series of major works projects including a £250,000 rebuild of the Chancel Arch and reroofing, a £200,000 interior restoration in 2011 and is now restored to its former beauty. The fine Norman and Beard Organ was renovated and enhanced in 2014 and recently a toilet and kitchen area have been installed at the back of the church and at the same time some of the pews at the front of the church were removed to create a larger performance area. An appeal will be launched later this year to raise funds for improved disabled access and resurfacing of the church path.

An Outreach Post Office opens twice a week at the back of the Church.

The village has a thriving community with a small primary school which caters for both children of the village and surrounding villages, a pub and a very active village hall which is



available for hire.

The church is open every day to visitors and is available to all as a special place of peace, tranquillity and spiritual support.

There is a thriving choir that was formed in 2013 and sings at the Choral Eucharist service on the 1st Sunday of the month. The choir currently has in excess of 20 members and also sings at Feast Days, in concerts in the church and will sing evensong at Canterbury and Rochester Cathedrals during 2023

Worship and Church Life

There are regular services on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month at 09.00. Services alternate with Chillenden and several members of congregation worship at both. Coffee is served after services and a warm welcome is offered to all.



Baptisms are incorporated into the Morning Service when requested and the church is a regular venue for Weddings.

The choir sings at the first Sunday of each month as well as at special services. The choir provides an additional uplift at services which enhances worship.

All services use Common Worship

Occasional Choral Evensongs are held within the church.

Congregational numbers have struggled to recover after the Covid lockdowns, but more recently there has been some improvement in numbers.

The church benefits by an active PCC, Flower and Cleaning Rotas.

Outreach and Church Activities

The village school hold weekly services in the church and observe Easter, Harvest and Christmas with special activities.

The Choir has members from many of the local villages and from further afield.

Regular concerts catering for a wide range of musical tastes are staged in the church details of concerts can be found at www.goodnestonmusic.com .

The Village Hall is used for a series of Film nights during the winter months for the benefit of the Church and the Village Hall.

The Harvest Supper is hosted on alternate years by Chillenden and Goodnestone and is always a sell-out. Quiz nights in the village hall also raise funds for the Church and bring friends and neighbours together.



Appendix D: The Parish of Nonington

Introduction

Nonington is a small village set in the East Kent countryside, roughly halfway between Dover and Canterbury. Demographically there is a mix of people - had been moving towards the older/retired but recently young families have moved into the village. There are about 300 dwellings, and the housing is a mix of privately owned and rented.

Church and village



The Anglican church building is medieval and dedicated to St Mary the Virgin. There are 16 on the Electoral roll, not all worshipping regularly. The small band of regular worshippers are dedicated and hardworking. A re-ordering project completed during lockdown has provided a toilet, tea station and an open area at the west end for social use or informal worship groups.

There is a Baptist Chapel in the village linked to the Baptist Church in Eythorne. It also has a small group of dedicated and hardworking worshippers.

Of special note here and very important to us in Nonington

is that St Mary's and chapel have worshipped together weekly for over thirty years. We have a routine that fits well with both village worshippers and the Canonry Benefice; the first two Sundays the venue is in church and the second two Sundays in chapel. When there is a fifth Sunday there is a Benefice Service, the venue being decided from a rota of the churches in the Canonry Benefice

Worship and Church Life

Other activities - 3rd Wednesday a Compline via Zoom; 3rd Friday Happy Hour in St Mary's; 1st and 3rd Thursday (when leader available) Seekers Bible Study; Every Thursday morning Coffeestop in chapel; December Christmas Tree Festival. These 'other activities' are ecumenical/community based and have not required the Vicar to organise or lead.



There is an active Reader/Licensed Lay Minister living in the village.

There is a church of England Primary School in Nonington. It is small but dedicated to its pupils, who come mainly from surrounding villages. The church is used for Festival Services, and we help where we can. The close relationship that used to exist has been affected

by Covid/Lockdowns/changes in staff and all its ramifications. It is hoped to renew closer relations.

The Diocesan Centre for Healing and Wholeness, The living Well, is based in Nonington in what was once the vicarage. We support this and some of us are involved in varying roles.

Nonington is home to a community of families who are members of the Exclusive Brethren. There is no religious or social interaction.

Regular services

1st & 4th Holy Communion
2nd Breakfast church
3rd Morning Worship.

Outreach and Church Activities

On the edge of the village there is a Bruderhof Community – Beechgrove. There are close relationships with the village and surrounding area and many friendships exist. They frequently join in/contribute to community activities.

There are also many secular groups and activities within the village.

The really important thing is that Nonington is a good place to live and though church/chapel attendance is low the village is a friendly and caring community which supports the church/chapel and all sorts of good causes.



Appendix E: The Parish of Elmstone with Preston and Stourmouth

Introduction

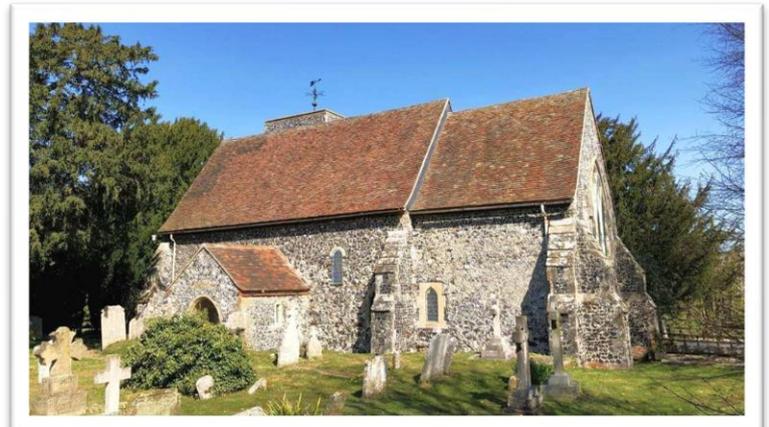


This parish covers several villages and hamlets in a very rural and agricultural area. The largest of these is Preston which has a village shop, pub, butcher, garden centre with restaurant/coffee shop and primary school, as well as a village hall and recreation ground. Preston has also changed significantly in population and geography

within the past 5 years, with a very substantial development of new housing (70+ units) at one end of the village and several much smaller developments. On the other hand, Elmstone, Stourmouth and West Stourmouth have remained largely unchanged for many years with only a handful of new properties and virtually no communal facilities (except for 2 pubs in Stourmouth).

Church and village

The make-up of the villages is quite mixed, with a significant proportion of larger houses and farms, as well as all age groups in the population.



Employment in the local area (ie the villages themselves) is relatively limited, not least because many of the agricultural jobs tend to be seasonal and filled by overseas temporary workers. When coupled with an extremely limited public transport provision to commute to work elsewhere, this perhaps makes these villages less suited to lower income

groups when compared with the much larger towns in East Kent with better transport and employment prospects and lower cost housing.

With an overall population of just over 1,200, Preston is the largest of the villages (at 900) with Stourmouth and West Stourmouth next (250) and Elmstone (<100) the smallest. The parish sustains 3 churches, Preston and Elmstone being fully active and West Stourmouth now being in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust. Although Stourmouth is separate and contains much of the overall Stourmouth population, this village is extremely low-lying (underwater several centuries ago), which is the reason that church is at West Stourmouth.

St. Mildred's Church, Preston and Elmstone Church



All of the churches are ancient with Saxon/Norman roots and, in the Kentish style, largely constructed of flint. Preston and Elmstone are in fair condition, albeit in constant need of minor maintenance and repairs, but neither has provision of proper kitchen facilities or WCs. Both churches have had their own Church Wardens for many years, although Preston has struggled in recent years to fill these posts.

Preston: St Mildred's: With a capacity of up to 120, this church has several fine features and good bells. Although in an attractive location, it is located outside the main part of the village (and off the main road) next to Preston Court which is a popular wedding venue. It is a significant distance from the new housing development, which was built at the opposite end of the village.

Elmstone: This is a small church (max capacity 70) in a pretty and spacious setting in a central location in the hamlet of Elmstone; it also has a number of fine features. Its small and cosy atmosphere (hopefully helped by a welcoming congregation) led one recent benefice vicar to describe it as her 'duvet church'!

Worship and Church Life

Worship has been split evenly between Preston and Elmstone for many years, with each church having services on 2 Sundays per month (all Eucharists except for one family service in Preston). Although quite a few people attend both churches, a significant number also only go to one of them, some opting to go further afield when there isn't a service at their location. The constraints of a multi-church benefice has resulted in less than optimal timings for some services, which informal surveys indicate has affected congregation numbers.

Preston had seen dwindling numbers in its congregation for some time, partly exacerbated by Covid and perhaps the church's location, until a recent village meeting and a complete re-focus of worship on the family service, which is now the only service each month. This has seen a remarkable turnaround, much better than could have been foreseen, and this service is now well attended by a good cross-section of the community and age ranges. Given its proximity to Preston Court, it has in the past been a very popular wedding venue, although the number of these has reduced considerably recently due to the shortage of clergy able to conduct such services.

Elmstone has for a number of years had high congregation numbers for its size but, given the lack of children in the hamlet, this is almost exclusively adult and there has been no perceived need for a family service there. These numbers have reduced a little recently, partly due to Covid and possibly the service timing, but are still at a healthy enough level to sustain both the church and the spiritual needs of its congregation.

The churches have an active joint PCC who meet every other month with six members.

Regular services

1st & 3rd Sundays – 10.00am Elmstone
2nd Sunday – 10.30am Preston

Worship

As is quite common in villages and rural areas, the core congregations have preferred a fairly traditional approach to worship, with a familiar format, well-known hymns and not

too long sermons! That said, and is now being proved at Preston, most are very happy with a more modern and informal offering, both words and music, especially for the family service to better engage the children.

Both churches have become very familiar with a variety of clergy, many retired, taking their services and try hard to make them feel very welcome when our own vicar is unable to be present. As is common in many rural parishes, organist provision is currently largely dependent on one person – the hymn singing is however always enthusiastic and spirited!

Under the Churches Conservation Trust, West Stourmouth has 6 services a year, all of which are much-appreciated BCP Evening Prayer with hymns.

Outreach and Church Activities

Outreach and pastoral care can be two of the limitations in a multi-church benefice, particularly for the smaller villages and churches which inevitably tend to become a lower priority than the biggest centre of population, which in our case is Ash. That said, Preston is a very active village community, mostly centred in and around the village hall which is in a very central location. The church has therefore focused its efforts on occasional events, often in conjunction with major church festivals (such as Harvest Festival or a Christmas tree decorating competition). Church congregation members are regular participants in many wider village activities.

Elmstone is quite different. While most residents there attend social activities in Preston, there is a clear desire for some events in the hamlet itself. As the only public building available, the church (and church meadow) has therefore become a venue for a regular programme of social gatherings, including monthly Happy Hours, summer teas, a fete etc. To attract as wide a group of attendees as possible, these are often not overtly advertised as church outreach events, but they do normally raise funding for the upkeep of the church, as well as raising awareness of the beauty (and needs) of the building amongst the wider village.

Both churches have occasional concerts and talks. Members of the Friends of Preston and Elmstone Churches, a group which exists largely to raise funds for the churches, organise most of the events and have over the past few years done a great deal to ensure the parish's financial viability.

