



A GROWING PARISH WITH HOPE IN OUR HEARTS!

BEWSBOROUGH PARISH

Near Dover Kent

Whitfield, Shepherdswell, Guston, Eythorne / Elvington
with Waldershare, Coldred and Barfrestone



**Whitfield
Coldred Church Fete
Barfrestone Church**

**Dover Castle seen from
Guston
Barfrestone 12th century
Door Lintel
Guston Village**

**New Housing at Whitfield
School Christmas Service
Eythorne Elvington School**





Good Friday Walk Shepherds Well

**“The core of what we do is about personal contact -
we need to spread the love of Jesus.”**

Parishioner at Away Evening

BEWSBOROUGH IN BRIEF

- churches rooted in their communities;
- strong and welcoming schools' relationships;
- imaginative and practical community initiatives;
- committed churchwardens and lay leaders;
- a parish which has learned a great deal during the vacancy;
- significant opportunities for mission in a growing Whitfield;
- and the opportunity to help shape something bigger than a single benefice through the new Dover Rural Mission Area.

CONTENTS

Welcome from our churchwardens	5
Introduction to Bewsborough	6
Welcome from the Diocese of Canterbury.....	7
Could it be you?	9
Housing	10
The parish and surrounding area.....	11
Our Schools	12
Our community programme and other local partners.....	13
Spiritual Development.....	15
The Core Team	16
Worship and Mission around the Churches.....	19
Dover Rural Group Ministry	21
Appendices: Parish Statistics and Finances.....	22

Welcome from our churchwardens

Welcome to our profile for the role of Rector in the Benefice/Parish of Bewsborough near Dover in Kent.

Over the last 5 years Bewsborough Parish has started to grow its congregations, its mission and its reach into our communities. This has been an exciting period for us all. After a long period of decline it was exhilarating to see the church gain in confidence and embed itself in our schools and in the lives of our villages.

It showed us that things can change and that the church can be a key part of people's lives in the modern world.

We are working hard to maintain what has been achieved in recent years. We now need a Rector who can help us to develop this work on the foundations laid by our previous incumbent and our ministry team.

Bewsborough is a single parish with 6 churches in the countryside northeast of Dover. Part of the parish is a matrix of English country villages of varying sizes. The Southern section is a housing growth area for Dover. The parish therefore has existing well established communities combined with the inspiring challenge of building the Church in a rapidly growing new community.

If you would like to have a conversation with someone to further explore this opportunity, please contact:

Yours faithfully,

Jonathan Bates -Church Warden,
Glynis Farthing -Church Warden,
Jenny Hunt -PCC Vice Chairman

Introduction to Bewsborough

AT BEWSBOROUGH...

We believe that God is at work in our parish on the very edge of England. That is why we are serving it - rejoicing about it, worrying about it and investing our lives into it.

To us Bewsborough feels that it is at the centre of the known world! It is a hub traversed by millions of tourists going on holiday and millions of tonnes of freight hauled by lorries from across Europe. It is situated on the North Downs, the chalk escarpment that forms the White Cliffs of Dover when it meets the Channel. It is an ancient place with Roman Roads, Saxon Churches and a ringside seat on the history of our continent. We are an hour from London, 3 hours from Paris and 20 minutes from the mother church of the Anglican Communion in Canterbury.

We have rapidly growing suburbs and wonderful countryside. We have areas of relative poverty and a lot of the 'squeezed middle'. We are ordinary but we feel that we are exceptional. This is because some exceptional things happen here.

HOPE

Until the arrival of our previous rector, the church here was slowly managing decline. He showed us that it was possible to grow confidently. He set up a range of community activities in the areas of the parish that needed the most support. This mission to the isolated, young mothers, carers and small children through the "Let's Activities" programme proved that the church could achieve things. The involvement of a range of local organisations including the local authority also demonstrated that partnership working was practical and fruitful.

WELCOMING SCHOOLS

The schools work that has developed over the last 5 years is particularly exciting. Over 1200 primary school children have become involved in celebrating the major church festivals and with most receiving regular assemblies with Christian worship. Every year each child on leaving primary school receives a leaving present from the church. The children benefiting have been at all the primary schools in the parish not just the Church of England ones.

OPPORTUNITY

We believe that much more is possible especially in the rapidly growing community of Whitfield. We know that it needs a message driven by Christian hope so that people come together to build a better future. We are determined to make this happen.

SUCCESS

So that is a sketch of our parish -its strengths and its weaknesses. We know that we can succeed. In Bewsborough we have the opportunity to achieve great things and improve the lives of our rapidly growing population both spiritually and practically. It is an opportunity that is worth taking and celebrating.

AN ATTRACTIVE CHALLENGE

We hope you find this challenge exciting as we do. Please contact us to learn more about Bewsborough and how we can grow the church here together.

Welcome from the Diocese of Canterbury

FROM THE BISHOP OF DOVER

Bewsborough is a parish of ancient churches, strong communities and new opportunities.

At a time of considerable change in the life of our Diocese and our nation, the people of these churches are seeking to follow where God is leading them. In recent years they have developed new relationships with schools, local organisations and their wider communities, and they have discovered fresh confidence in sharing the love of Christ in practical and visible ways.



This is not a parish waiting for someone to arrive with all the answers. It is a parish that has been praying, serving and discerning together, and which believes that God is calling it onwards.

Alongside its own local mission, Bewsborough is helping to shape the developing Dover Rural Mission Area, bringing together neighbouring benefices in a new spirit of collaboration and mutual support. This creates an exciting opportunity to contribute not only to the life of one parish but also to the renewal of rural ministry more widely.

We are seeking a priest who will join in God's mission here with faith, imagination, humility and hope; someone who will work alongside God's people in helping others discover the transforming love of Jesus Christ.

As you read this profile, I encourage you to pray and to ask whether God may be calling you to this next chapter of ministry.

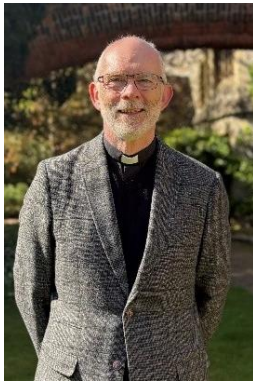
The Rt Revd Rose Hudson-Wilkin

Bishop of Dover and Bishop in Canterbury

FROM THE ARCHDEACON OF ASHFORD

I have had the privilege of working alongside the churches of Bewsborough for many years and have seen both the challenges they face and the opportunities they have embraced.

What encourages me most is not simply what has been achieved, but the spirit in which it has happened. During recent years the parish has developed stronger relationships with schools, grown its community engagement, and seen lay people step forward with generosity, commitment and imagination. The vacancy has demonstrated that this is a parish with both resilience and confidence.



This appointment comes at an important moment.

Within Bewsborough there is significant scope to build on recent developments, particularly in Whitfield and through the strong partnerships that already exist across the parish. At the same time, the new Rector will play a part in the developing Dover Rural Mission Area as neighbouring benefices work together to create sustainable and mission-focused patterns of rural ministry for the future. [\[Dover Dean...e 20260318 | Word\]](#), [\[Briefing N...Ministry\) | PDF\]](#)

The next Rector will not be arriving to start from scratch. You will find committed people, supportive colleagues, fruitful relationships and a parish that believes God has more in store for it.

If you are excited by mission, value collaborative ministry and are willing to help shape the future of both parish and rural church life, I encourage you to explore this opportunity prayerfully.

I would very much look forward to working with you.

The Ven Darren Miller
Archdeacon of Ashford

Could it be you?

The PCC is seeking a Rector with the discernment, confidence and spiritual grace to lead a team in the next phase of building the church in our villages and in the major new housing area around Whitfield north of the town of Dover.

- **We will pray for you and your family throughout your ministry.**
- **We offer a Ministry Team and a PCC that is strongly supportive and wants to grow further as a team.**
We hope you will help build our teams to enable us to continue the development of our Ministry and Community work.
- **We have learnt to go out into our communities and engage with people where they live, learn and have fun.**
We hope you will be keen to help us go out into all parts of our communities to build trust and confidence with local people across the parish.
- **We have learnt the value of training our laity so that they can support their priest.**
We hope you will help us to develop a successful Training Programme in the local church community. The Diocese of Canterbury has good training facilities that are tailor-made to the needs of local parishes.
- **We now have experience of partnership working to help make a difficult task easier and more successful.**
We hope you will help us work together to develop the existing links with partner organisations including
 - Local authorities
 - Education
 - Local charities
 - Other church organisations
- **We offer a parish where our schools welcome church input.**
We hope you will have a calling to work with and build our ministry in our schools. Our local schools are very positive about church involvement.
- **We have developed and are running successful and rewarding community programmes.**
We hope you will encourage and support our new community activities so that we can grow and extend them.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

We would like you to be:

- An individual of strong and compelling faith
- Energetic
- A team builder
- A good delegator
- And have strong communication skills

“We suddenly realised that the people we needed to help were already there waiting to be asked!”

Parishioner at Away Evening

Housing

The Rectory is a modern 4 bedroom house with a nice garden in a pleasant part of Whitfield.



The Vicarage, Bewsbury Cross Lane

The parish and surrounding area



*After the Remembrance Day Service
2025*

Bewsborough Parish is an attractive place to live. It is located on the last section of the North Downs before they cut by the sea to become the famous White Cliffs of Dover

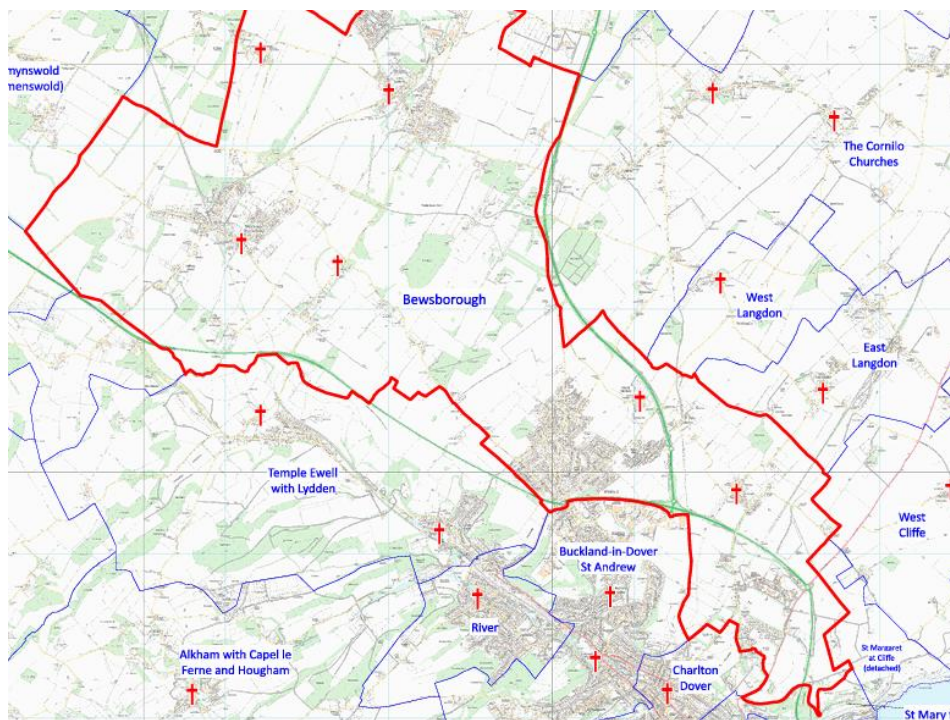
The countryside is rolling agricultural land dotted with villages of varying sizes

House prices are moderate by Southeast England standards, travel connections are excellent by road and rail.

Schools are good. The area is served by many primary schools, several High Schools and two local Dover Grammar Schools (Boys/Girls). Canterbury is a few miles North and is a cultural centre with a theatre, 3 universities and many schools as well as the great cathedral.

France and the continent is a short ferry trip or tunnel ride away and is visible on the horizon much of the time! London is just over an hour away by train on the HS1 link.

MAP OF THE PARISH BOUNDARY



Our Schools



“We enjoy close links with St Peter and St Paul's Church”

Eythorne Elvington Primary School Governor

“Rooted in Faith, Growing in Wisdom, Branching into the World”

Guston Church of England Primary School Mission Statement

There are 4 primary schools in the parish on 5 sites. -Guston C of E , Whitfield on 2 sites, Eythorne/ Elvington and Shepherdsweel C of E Primary School. All welcome input from the church. The 2 church schools and Eythorne/Elvington are very strong supporters of our ministry with church governors on all 3.

The work over the last 5 years has been impressive with church led assemblies, church services and celebrations of significant school events. This is a significant area of mission which has great scope for growth. Over 1,200 children & youngsters are involved at key times!

“As a Church School we work extremely closely with our village church, St Andrew's. The Clergy, who are involved in our worship and governance are a vital resource for religious education and pastoral care.

Local clergy and other ministers join us in school to lead worship regularly. Our classes at Shepherdswell School visit St Andrew's church often, for quiet reflection time, as part of our special reflection days, important occasions in the Church calendar and during our RE teaching about Christianity."

Shepherdswell School Prospectus

Our community programme and other local partners

We are a parish that is learning to listen to our communities and discover what people need spiritually. We know that we are not as good as we could be at listening but we are discovering that the church is welcomed wholeheartedly into our communities. To some of us it has been a surprise but a very welcome one. We need to do more of the same and more that is different. To enable this we need courage, energy and faith. We have all these things but you can never have too much especially when there are many people to reach.

In our experience, many people's reaction to church is that it "is not for them" and so the key role of a ministry team is to go out and find out what "is for them" and bring it into the ministry of our parish.

Our previous Rector together with a wide range of parishioners developed the "Let's Activity Programme" to take the church out into our communities. We had become rather inward looking and these new activities were good for everyone.

We set up the following:-

- i) **Let's Eat** offers company and food in the village of Elvington. About 40 people come along once a month for a two course meal in the village community centre. The venture is supported by the local councils and an organisation called "Woodpecker Court". This helps adolescents with learning and behavioural difficulties. Let's Eat gives these young people experience socially and also develops skills in cooking and serving food. Let's Eat is a great success and open to everyone.
- ii) **Let's Play** is a parent/carer toddler and baby group in Whitfield Village Hall. This has become a success with a large number of children and adults attending. It has been running for 4 years.

- iii) **Let's Chat** is also in Whitfield at the pavilion at the Recreation Ground. It is strongly supported. It involves bringing people together to meet and talk. There is a dog walking "subsidiary" which provides exercise as well as human contact!

All this joint working has allowed the church to expand its mission while supporting and developing local communities. Partnership working in an area as large as Bewsborough is an important and successful way of expanding our Mission.

After our Rector moved to a new parish we were worried we would not be able to sustain the work he had done in our communities. In fact we have been able to. People stepped forward to pick up from other people and others have become involved. It has been exciting to see this happen. It feels a little like the growth of the church described at the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles!



Poster for Let's Play

“When we asked for volunteers to help with ‘Let’s Play’ we had 8 or 9 people say they would help. Of those 6 have now been DBS checked!”

Parishioner at Away Evening

Spiritual Development

The parish runs regular courses for example,

- Alpha
- Advent and Lent Courses
- Bible Study
- Missional Learning Communities

The diocese ran a LyCiG (Leading your Church into Growth) course. The learning from this forms a sound basis for future growth across Bewsborough and the new Rural Ministry Area.

“I was not a regular church goer but one Sunday I went to church. The people there were so friendly I have been regularly ever since”

Parishioner at Away Evening

The Core Team

Below we set out a brief introduction to our core team of Ministry Team and PCC members.

However it is important to recognize that in addition to Core Team the work of the church in Bewsborough is made possible and is driven by many people in a range of wider teams.

These teams and the people actively involved include the following,

- Retired clergy
- Parishioners involved in worship delivery and preparation
- Parishioners delivering pastoral care
- Community activity teams for the Let's Programme and other work
- Active Local Church Council members for each church

These wider teams in total number over 40 people. They are all actively bringing our mission to the area and supporting the work of the church in Bewsborough.



Jenny Groombridge – Reader

Jenny was made a Reader and licensed in 2015. She leads services across the parish.

Jenny lives in Eythorne and describes her home church as St Nicholas' Barfrestone

Jenny also has an important role in the parish overseeing the Safeguarding processes and as such is a member of the PCC. She also serves on the Bewsborough Forum Sub-Committee of the PCC as well as organizing the monthly "Let's Eat"

initiative at Elvington.



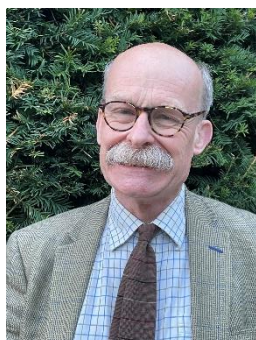
Sarah Hindle – Pastoral Assistant.

Sarah trained as Pastoral Assistant under our previous Rector and is involved with the many of the parish's community projects. Although Sarah lives outside the parish she worships in all of our six churches but counts her home church as St Nicholas, Barfrestone. Sarah also serves on the PCC as one of the Bewsborough Deanery Synod representatives.



Jan Griffin - Authorised Lay Minister

Jan is an ALM in Bewsborough and serves mainly at St Andrew's in Shepherdswell, where she has lived and worshipped for over forty years, although she also leads worship at other churches in the parish. She has strong personal links with the Diocese of Antananarivo in Madagascar and has been instrumental in fund raising for the church there.



Jonathan Bates- Churchwarden

Chair of the Bewsborough PCC and Bewsborough Forum Jonathan has lived in Coldred for 40 years and worships at the local church, St Pancras. As well as being Chairman of the PCC he also chairs the Bewsborough Forum, that was set up following the resignation of our previous Rector to ensure the continued smooth running of Bewsborough Parish. He has organised the Coldred Church Fete for a number of years.



Glynis Farthing – Churchwarden

Glynis lives at East Langdon (just outside the Bewsborough boundary) but lived in Guston for many years, where she still worships at St Martin's. She is churchwarden of both Guston and St Peter's Whitfield. Glynis is a member of the PCC and also a member of the Bewsborough Forum. She has also been involved with the "Let's Play" initiative that was started this year in Guston. Glynis is a foundation governor of Guston Church of England Primary School.



Jenny Hunt – Vice-Chair of the PCC and the Bewsborough Forum

Jenny has lived in Shepherdswell for 35 years and worships at St Nicholas' Barfrestone, where she served as Churchwarden for many years. During the interregnum amongst many other things she has been responsible for the editing and circulation of the on-line "Bewsborough Bulletin", that lets our church family and other interested parties know what is going on in the parish.



Marianne Slater – Treasurer for Bewsborough PCC

Marianne lives at Guston and worships at St Andrew's, Shepherdswell. As well as being the Bewsborough Treasurer she is also Treasurer to Dover Deanery and has been for many years. She is a member of Christians Together in Dover Executive Committee and was their secretary for 10 years.



Mary Fagg – Secretary to Bewsborough PCC

Mary lives in Eythorne and is the Secretary to the PCC. She worships at St Peter & St Paul, Eythorne and has served her local church for many years. Mary has links with the local Baptist Church and runs the local Brownies



Jane Hartridge – Member of the PCC

Although Jane now lives at Whitfield she previously lived in Shepherdswell and continues to worship there at St Andrew's. As well as representing St Andrew's on the PCC she also serves on the Bewsborough Forum and is very involved with the "Let's Chat" and "Let's Play" in Whitfield.

“When I started to add up all the people who are involved regularly and consistently in our churches and activities I could not believe how many there were!”

Pastoral Assistant

Worship and Mission around the Churches

Bewsborough Parish is proud of its support for a range of forms of worship across its 6 churches.

WHITFIELD – ST PETERS



The church has café style services in the local school. One communion service is held monthly in the Saxon church on the outskirts of the village.

Much work has been done recently to increase the footprint of the church in the Whitfield. Two programmes have been particularly successful – Let's Chat and Let's Play designed to help the isolated and families with small children. These programmes have increased the church link within Whitfield and have led to large increase in baptisms as well as funerals and weddings.

Whitfield is the main housing expansion area for Dover but sees itself as separate from the town. The current population is about 8,000 people. Housing Plans for the area show growth to a population of about 20,000 over the next 10 years. Evidence for this is seen with active house building taking place on a large scale.

Compared to the population of the area congregations are quite small at both the services in the village hall or school and those in the church on the outskirts. Opportunities to continue the development of the ministry begun in the last few years are significant and the rewards substantial.

GUSTON – ST MARTIN OF TOURS



Guston services centre on BCP evensong and evening prayer. Links to the church team in Dover are good.

Guston is centred on a small rural village. Guston's population of 1700 people includes many on the northeastern edge of Dover. Generally this population see themselves as part of Dover rather than the rural and suburban area to its north. Guston Church of England Primary School is supportive of the local church both in Guston and Dover.

SHEPHERDSWELL - ST ANDREWS



The church uses services from Common Worship and sees itself as neither high or low in character. A covenant with the local Methodist church is centred here.

Shepherdswell has a successful church seeing gentle growth, increasing numbers of young people attending and a renewal of confidence. There is a strong link between the church, the church primary school and the village.

Shepherdswell village has a wide range of village societies and activities and the church works within this network. Shepherdswell Church of England Primary School strongly supports church involvement. Our lay reader is a church governor here. Messy Church has run in the Village Hall for many years.

EYTHORNE AND ELVINGTON WITH WALDERSHARE –ST PETER AND ST PAUL



This church has midweek communion services run by a retired priest. The church in Eythorne has struggled due to a falling congregation. However church links with the state Primary School are excellent. Church involvement within the school is substantial and our lay reader is a governor. The parish has been working hard in the linked village of Elvington and working with local government and education services runs a successful lunch club -Let's Eat.

COLDRED -ST PANCRAS



Coldred has two BCP services a month alternating in the intervening weeks with Barfrestone. The annual celebration of Candlemas is a particular highlight for the church which involves illumination with a hundred candles.

The small Saxo-Norman church is on the pilgrimage route between Canterbury and Rome –the Via Francigena. Many international pilgrims stop at the church on their way.

Coldred has an annual church fete which has run every year for over 100 years. This takes place on the evening of the last Friday in June attracting hundreds of people from a wide area. This

event has always been vital to supporting this small church's finances! Coldred church has strong links with its small community and its pub.

BARFRESTONE - ST NICHOLAS



The church celebrates both BCP Holy Communion and BCP Morning Prayer. Services every other week with Coldred. The patronal service on 6th December is celebrated annually in the evening with a full church.

Barfrestone is an internationally known late Norman church which attracts many visitors from throughout Europe. Considering its small size the church is well supported and runs a successful Friends Organisation.

Dover Rural Group Ministry

The Diocese following consultation has set up a "Group Ministry" for the villages around Dover. This replaces a previous Group Ministry arrangement. The intention is to provide support to clergy working in the area and to encourage best use of resources to develop mission for local populations. Governance is via the existing parish structure bolstered with a joint working support agreement for the local clergy.

Appendices: Parish Statistics and Finances

POPULATIONS

Shepherdswell	1,850
Coldred	150
Eythorne & Elvington	2,500
Whitfield	7,800
Guston	1,700
Barfrestone	60
TOTAL	<u>14,060</u>

GROWTH FIGURES

Whitfield is the major growth area with expansion up to about 20,000 people over the next 10 years.

FINANCES

The parish has traditionally paid its parish share in full. Church finances are stable although all are agreed that giving needs to increase to allow the church to achieve its potential.

The Let's Activities Programme have proved to be largely self-financing which is very welcome.

Income in 2025 increased by 17% from the previous year which was a surprise after some lean years following Covid.

The total reserves of the parish were £230,000 as at 31st December 2025 of which £114,000 were in restricted funds.