



# Saxon Shoreline Benefice

Rector of the Saxon Shoreline

## BENEFICE PROFILE 2020

A group of eight churches overlooking Romney Marsh in Kent



*St Martin's  
Aldington*

*St Peter & St Paul  
Bilsington*

*St Rumwold  
Bonnington*

*St Mary  
Kenardington*

*Church of the Good  
Shepherd  
Hamstreet*

*St Mary  
Orlestone*

*St Mary Magdalene  
Ruckinge*

*St Matthew  
Warehorne*

## **An Introduction from Bishop Rose**

Thank you for taking an interest in this role. You'll see from the rest of the profile some of the specific things that the benefice is looking for – and a little of what the team here hopes the future may look like. Of course, part of your discernment process in coming to this role is 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.

## **Where we're heading**

At the heart of all we do is a vision of transformation for ourselves and our communities: no one can encounter God and remain unchanged. In our diocese, we want to increasingly become a Christian community transformed through encounter with Christ, overflowing to transform and bless the families, homes and communities we serve in Kent: *Changed Lives* → *Changing Lives*. In your role, in your place, we'll be looking for you to play a crucial part in making this vision a reality.

Changed Lives → Changing Lives unites us in purpose but will be expressed in different ways according to what makes sense for different parts of our diocesan family. It's also a living strategy – as we listen to God and one another, the shape of our work together will undoubtedly change and grow. Could you help to develop this vision for the future? Find out more [here](#) or speak to the Ven Darren Miller, Archdeacon of Ashford on 01233 712649 or at [darren.miller@archdeacashford.org](mailto:darren.miller@archdeacashford.org).

## **Our commitment to you**

We know that supporting health, flourishing ministers (lay and ordained) is crucial for a healthy, flourishing diocese. That's why we offer the 'Canterbury Diet' to all our incumbent ministers – this is an intentional programme for ministerial development, health, growth and faith. A lay programme is in development too. Additionally, we offer a

range of specialised training events, as well as 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,



**The Rt Revd Rose Hudson-Wilkin**

Bishop of Dover and Bishop in Canterbury



# The Methodist Church

## SOUTH KENT CIRCUIT

South Kent Methodist Circuit Office

c/o St Andrews Methodist Church

Surrenden Road

FOLKESTONE

CT19 4DY

### **RE – SAXON SHORELINE BENEFICE VACANCY**

Part of the Benefice is the ecumenical Church of the Good Shepherd in Hamstreet, which is a long-standing single congregation LEP with the Methodist Church.

Using a Methodist building, conveniently situated in the heart of the village, gives the congregation the opportunity to reach out in practical ways to those around them. This church is therefore a valued part of the South Kent Methodist Circuit. (Please see our website: <http://www.southkentmethodistcircuit.org.uk>)

We would welcome the new appointee to be an integral part of our Circuit Staff and Leadership Teams, with 'Authorised Presbyterian' status to be sought to enable them to serve this united congregation. The minister would be able to avail themselves of the collegueship and support of our staff team, Circuit Stewards and our administration networks. As this is made available, we also recognise that careful discernment would need to be used to balance the responsibilities and opportunities in this ecumenical role.

A member of the Circuit staff team would be working alongside the new appointee, so that collaborative ministry can be offered and links maintained with both the parent denominations. We would hope that ecumenical working would be a high priority and enthusiasm for anyone who may be considering this exciting role.

*Sam Funnell*

Rev Sam Funnell

Circuit Superintendent Minister



# Saxon Shoreline Benefice

## WELCOME

The benefice consists of eight Churches overlooking the Romney Marsh in Kent.

We are part of the Romney and Tenterden Deanery in the Diocese of Canterbury. The central parish, Hamstreet/Orlestone, has been in an Ecumenical Partnership with the Methodist Church for the past forty years. Within our eight churches we have seven PCCs and one ECC. One long-term lay reader is very active in the Benefice and another is in training.

We are excited and hopeful for the future following the recent installation of Rose Hudson-Wilkin as our new Bishop of Dover who is currently getting to know this diverse Diocese which of course has Canterbury Cathedral at its heart. Diocesan House keeps everyone informed of mission and prayer initiatives plus events across the Diocese via email and publications and offers expertise, help and guidance from its various departments.

The Deanery is very large, encompassing an area from Aldington and Dymchurch in the East, almost all of Romney Marsh in the South, to Rolvenden in the West and Smarden in the North. It keeps churches informed of Diocesan initiatives and invites all members of congregations to attend open forums on topics which are thought to be of help and interest to all churches. There are regular Chapter meetings.



## RECTORY

*The Rectory is situated in the heart of the village of Hamstreet. Built in the 1960s, there is an entrance porch, downstairs cloakroom, study, lounge, dining room, kitchen with a utility area leading to a garden room, 5 bedrooms and a family bathroom. Outside there is an east facing front garden, a driveway, plus a large rear garden.*







# Saxon Shoreline Benefice

Hamstreet is 7 miles from Ashford which has the William Harvey Hospital, shopping and entertainment facilities commensurate with a very fast-expanding town. Senior schools are in Ashford, New Romney and Tenterden. Facilities in Hamstreet include: Hamstreet Primary Academy (rated Good in 2017) and Highways Nursery; a large doctor's surgery; a convenience store with post office counter; coffee shop; garden centre; sports and leisure facilities; a care home; numerous clubs and societies including the W.I.; a good pub and a small Indian restaurant. There is an hourly bus service to Ashford and a railway station which feeds (at least once an hour) into Ashford International Station from where there is a half hourly, 35 minutes, train service into London St Pancras International. The Eurostar service to the continent can also be boarded at Ashford. The coast at Dymchurch is only 10 miles away. There are several annual events in the village organised by local volunteers.

There has been recent new housing development in Hamstreet and planning permission has been granted for another 50 dwellings, whilst there is an application in for a further 80 new homes with an up-to-60 bed care home.

Aldington, the second largest village has a primary school, two shops and a pub. The remaining villages are much smaller and have lost any school or shop they once had, although some still have a vibrant village hall and/or thriving pub.



## TRAVEL

*There is an hourly bus service to Ashford and a railway station which feeds (at least once an hour) into Ashford International Station from where there is a half hourly, 35 minute, train service into London St Pancras International. The Eurostar service to the continent can also be boarded at Ashford.*



# Saxon Shoreline Benefice

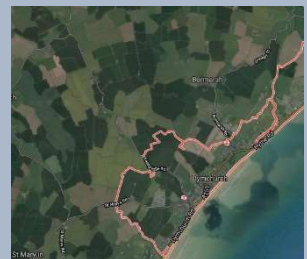
## STATEMENT OF NEEDS

The minister we pray for to join this Benefice will: -

- Lead us through prayer in this world we live in as Christians. They will love the scriptures, be able to bring them alive in this current climate, and will deliver clear, concise, challenging messages/sermons – accessible to all.
- Be able to embrace the Ecumenical partnership within one church in the Benefice and have a continuing influence with both Anglican and Methodist churches.
- Be able to adapt to each church's identity and style of worship whilst, at the same time, finding ways to unite the Benefice. We dream of spiritual growth which will attract all age congregations, which in turn will lead to further awareness of the churches within the villages.
- Be able to help each church embrace its community with love and care, and re-create Clerical links with both local primary schools.
- Take a lead in pastoral care, be a good listener and facilitate cross-Benefice teams (or individuals) to assist with leading on visiting, i.e. marriage, baptism, hospital visits. Be open to organised support as in encouraging and nurturing lay ministry, etc.
- Need to have excellent communication skills because of the diversity and distance of the churches and to delegate the administration work to others who are capable of performing this.

## DEANERY

*The Deanery encompasses a very large area from Aldington and Dymchurch in the East, almost all of the Romney Marsh in the South, to Rolvenden in the West and Smarden in the North.*



## DIOCESE

*We are excited and hopeful for the future following the recent installation of Rose Hudson-Wilkin as our new Bishop of Dover who is currently getting to know this diverse Diocese which of course has Canterbury Cathedral at its heart.*

# Saxon Shoreline Benefice

## ALDINGTON – ST MARTIN’S

St Martin’s is far more than the lovely church building. It’s the people who are travelling together, learning to grow in God’s love and grace, seeking to love and forgive, (after all, it is ‘when’ and not ‘if’ we get it wrong) and seeking to encourage each other to live and share the Good News of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.

We are a lively, informal church, with an electoral role of 34 who enjoy modern worship and welcome newcomers to share in the journey of being transformed through a relationship with Jesus Christ.

We actively encourage any church members to contribute to our services as they feel able, people being encouraged to join rotas for the prayers, readings, flowers, church cleaning and providing the coffee after the service.

During an average month we have two communion services, an all age service on the first Sunday, and a worship service on the third Sunday.

A fifth Sunday is often a United Benefice service or a Songs of Praise. Services are held at 10.45am and are prepared and led by one of our service leaders usually begun with some Testimony shared by members of the congregation telling of Gods provision in their lives that week.



*“4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name.*

*5 For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.”*

*Psalm 100.4-5*

# Saxon Shoreline Benefice

## ALDINGTON – ST MARTIN’S

### House Groups

Many from our congregation belong to one of the House groups in the village occurring regularly on Tuesday evenings, at the Lavenders, and Quarry House and also on a Wednesday morning at the Walnut Tree Pub. A Lent group is also planned this year to be held at the Mission Hall in the village

### Village Outreach

Our Church Community is active in many of the village events in particular hosting a Coffee Morning and Table top sale on a Saturday morning 5 times a year as well as other village events such as the VE day celebrations next May

Aldington Christians together is a group from different denominations who put various events on for the village and the Christmas Celebration at the Village Hall in 2019 was a great success and is likely to be repeated again next year.

Together with the Parish Council a Carol Service was held around the village Christmas Tree retiring to the Walnut Tree afterwards to continue the fellowship over mince pies and a drink

Christians Together hosted the traditional Remembrance Service at the Village War Memorial and was conducted by the Revd Rod Whateley just after his retirement. It was well attended by a wide representation from the village community, this year being facilitated by a PA system so that all could hear and join in.





# Saxon Shoreline Benefice

## ALDINGTON – ST MARTIN’S

### Flowers

Our church is always beautifully decorated with flowers by our dedicated flower arrangers. There is a regular rota, the flowers being done by members of the church family and people from the village

### Our Prayer Life

The Church has an active Prayer life, we have a Prayer Chain available for anyone to use, regular prayer meetings held every Tuesday evening and Sunday mornings at 9.30am in the Mission Chapel.

An annual Prayer day is held in the church in May over a 12 hour period with regular hourly bible readings, quiet music, people being encouraged to come and go or stay as long as they feel they need to. Prayer is always available in the side chapel at our Communion services and people are actively encouraged to feel free to ask for prayer at any time if they require it.





# Saxon Shoreline Benefice

## ALDINGTON – ST MARTIN’S

### Men’s Supper Evenings and Ladies Breakfasts

These are held regularly in the Walnut Tree Pub and are open to everyone in the village and areas around by ticket. They are always well attended and the well cooked meal is rounded off by an invited speaker chosen from a wide variety of backgrounds and experiences. A joyful and convivial occasion enjoyed by Christians in the village together with their friends and neighbours from all walks of life

### Young People and Sunday School

A lively Sunday School meets in the Tower room during morning services. All children of primary school age are invited to join in with the activities which include music, prayers and craft as they seek to learn more about walking in Faith together in Christ.

There is some outreach with the local school, Aldington Primary School where assemblies may be held and the children often visit the church for a short service at Easter. Cubs have had sleepovers in the church on occasion.



# Saxon Shoreline Benefice

## ALDINGTON – ST MARTIN'S

### Music at St Martin's

St Martins enjoys a wide variety of modern and traditional Christian worship music, ably assisted by its regular music group, who meet to practice on a Thursday evening in preparation for Sunday's service.

New members are always welcome

### St Martin's First Christmas Tree Festival

Our very first Christmas Tree Festival was held at the beginning of December. The event began with an Advent Carol Service held on the Friday evening, after which the Church was open for most of the weekend.

There were a total of 9 trees sponsored by a variety of village organisations and businesses who decorated them to reflect their own interests. The church's own tree was complemented by another tree in the Chancel - a prayer tree where people were invited to write prayers and thoughts on a star and hang it on the tree.

Finally, the Lady Chapel was decorated to be a quiet prayer space for anyone who wanted to use it. The event received lots of visitors from the village and local area, many of whom attended the Christingle Service with their children to formally close the Festival until next year.



# Saxon Shoreline Benefice

## BILSINGTON – ST PETER & ST PAUL

There are few churches approached through a farmyard and ours is one, described by Pevsner in the last century as being “prettily placed”, enjoying of the most beautiful views across the Romney Marsh and the Royal Military Canal and Bilsington with a listing of a church in The Domesday Book.

The small village of Bilsington is fairly spread out in all directions, beyond the main hub of houses on the crossroads in the centre of the village, with about 270 residents and fewer than 130 homes. It has a popular pub, The White Horse and an active Village Hall hosting many activities throughout the year.

There are 12 on the Electoral Roll with an average attendance of 12 at our regular HC service at 9am, using the BCP, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays of the month. Our Mothering Sunday, Easter, Harvest, Remembrance Sunday and Christmas services are well attended (averaging 30-35) and a very popular Blessing the Crib service held on Christmas Eve at 4pm where we have a Nativity an attendance of about 90, including many children. Our church has 18 pews and reasonably comfortably, seats 100 and is always open.

For many years we have alternated our Sunday morning worship with St Rumwold's in Bonnington as their services are on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays and in the past, the neighbouring village of Aldington, along with Bonnington and Bilsington shared a vicar and parish magazine. We are delighted to now be a part of the Saxon Shore Benefice and enjoy the added sense of unity this brings.

Our congregation may be small and perhaps on the older side but everyone is made to feel very welcome and we all enjoy the chatter over tea, coffee and biscuits after the service. We, like many churches, struggle to pay our full parish share despite fundraising and most people Gift Aiding their collection money. However, we are fortunate to have a wedding and party venue in Odo's Barn next to the church and as long as Ecclesiastical law is obeyed, it has meant we have on average about 7 weddings a year, which has certainly helped our finances and means our numbers are swelled by the prospective wedding couples. We manage to cover the daily running costs and have a sum on deposit for unexpected expenditure.

Our local Borough Councillor has also helped with funding any larger project, most recently the replacement of some shingle roof tiles and clearing the high gutters.







# Saxon Shoreline Benefice

## BILSINGTON – ST PETER & ST PAUL

Our PCC meets regularly and we have a cheerful approach to the agenda and problem solving. The church building is well maintained and it helps to have handy and helpful parishioners willing to take on minor tasks. The Quinquennial this year which no doubt will highlight any outstanding issues. We have central heating and electricity but no running water or cloakroom facilities.

We have a flower and cleaning rota with a wonderful and enthusiastic team doing their bit in keeping the church looking fresh and colourful. The churchyard is open for burials and is attended to by villagers, with regular mowing and strimming. It really looks its best in the spring when the daffodils are in full bloom and the sheep and their lambs are helpfully grazing it.

Bilsington children have a choice of 3 local village schools to attend - Aldington, Hamstreet and Mersham. For a few years now, we have held Mothering Sunday and Harvest Festival workshops in the hall for the village children and those of our neighbouring parishes and have had a vicar in attendance which have been popular and fun.

Our yearly Christmas wreath making workshops in aid of the church Christmas tree and flower fund have become so well attended, we now have 2 fun and festive evenings in early December where villagers and those further afield come, with about 40 people in total gathering in our village hall. These church events all help bring the community together.





# Saxon Shoreline Benefice

## BONNINGTON – ST RUMWOLD’S

St Rumwold’s Church Bonnington enjoys a special, isolated, beautiful position on the edge of the Romney Marsh, near to the Royal Military Canal.

There has been a church on the site since AD 796. Possibly starting as a Saxon chapel close to the ancient shoreline, where travellers may have taken refuge and prayed before a hazardous sea journey, it is now very much a Norman church. It is listed Grade 1 and retains a charming simplicity, with no electricity or running water.

The hamlet of Bonnington, which is part of the civil parish of Aldington and Bonnington, has under 50 houses and not many more than 100 people (2011 Census). Despite this St Rumwold’s has an Electoral Roll of 28 and a usual Sunday attendance ranging from 17 to 25 at 9.00am on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month with typically 45 on Easter Sunday and Christmas Day and 120 or more at our Carols by Candlelight service in Advent. The congregation is ‘gathered’ to some extent, from Aldington, Bilsington and further afield.

Our tradition is a ‘middle of the road’ Common Worship Holy Communion service with hymns accompanied on our hand-pumped organ. We serve coffee and biscuits after the service and endeavour to be welcoming to visitors and newcomers. Our services have for many years alternated with St Peter and St Paul Bilsington where Holy Communion is celebrated on 2nd and 4th Sundays at 9.00am according to the Book of Common Prayer. We believe together we offer complementary styles of worship along with St Martin’s Aldington and other churches in the benefice.



# Saxon Shoreline Benefice

## BONNINGTON – ST RUMWOLD'S

The demography of the congregation is fairly typical, most of us are retired, but we do have a few younger members who bring children from time to time. We have two young mothers with children on the PCC. Our Sunday collections are mostly Gift Aided and provide sufficient income to allow us to habitually pay our Parish Share in full, thus claiming the discount, as well as paying for the running expenses of being the worshipping church - heating, consumables and clergy expenses. Specific events are used to raise funds for the maintenance of the fabric, as well as supporting charities. Our church fete which is held every two years takes the form of Raft Races on the Royal Military Canal and is a big fund raiser. The PCC meets regularly but currently there is a vacancy for one churchwarden and a secretary.

The church building is well maintained. A Quinquennial Inspection is due in 2020. There has recently been a minor reordering with the formation of a lockable storeroom, the replacement of a wooden floor and redecorating as well as the removal of some pews. This was paid for entirely from fund raising. Proposals have been made to restore the ferramenta and glass of the windows but this work remains outstanding. Some funds for this exist but a further appeal would be required to pursue this. The churchyard is open for burials and is kept tidy by employing a local gardener.

Conventional evangelism is difficult in our situation but we try to be a presence in our community encouraging local people to get involved in our events. We aim to keep the church open 24 hours a day and it is indeed very rarely locked, as for example during building work. Our visitors' book is witness to the pleasure many 'pilgrims', cyclists and walkers get from finding it open and the opportunities it provides. It makes the building easily accessible to local people who can believe it is 'their' church. We also try to get them through the door with concerts and our lecture series, with food and fellowship on offer. We take pastoral opportunities from a 'can-do' approach to baptisms, weddings and funerals. We believe ordained clergy are an important part of this, being seen and known in the community.





# Saxon Shoreline Benefice

## KENARDINGTON – ST MARY’S

St Mary’s Church sits on the Saxon Shore Way long distance walk, half a mile from the centre of the village with its scattered population of about 360. The church offers extensive views of Romney Marsh and is a place of peace and quiet for its many visitors to sit in contemplation. It is open daily, all day. A family service is held here on the first Sunday of each month.

This church has offered a place of worship for many centuries and its future was recently fortunate to be of a particular personal vision of a sole local benefactor, the late Michael Uren KBE, whose trust will ensure that rental income from the adjacent Glebe House purchased by the benefactor, will be an endowment for the maintenance of the church building. The Uren Trust are happy to work with any new incumbent.

With its underfloor heating, the addition of a pentice, adjacent toilets and kitchen facilities, there is now an opportunity for wider use of the church that needs to be developed which in turn is hoped will encourage a larger congregation. It is currently used for concerts, but has the exciting potential as a venue for Deanery and Diocesan Quiet Days, Retreats and meetings; local and visiting art groups and a larger community meeting place, the village hall being right in the centre of the village but very small and with limited parking.

However, the right candidate will be someone with the skill, to help us build from what are quite challenging circumstances with a small congregation, a lack of officers, an isolated church but lots of potential and trust in God.







# Saxon Shoreline Benefice

## HAMSTREET & ORLESTONE – CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD / ST MARY'S

We are an Anglican/Methodist Ecumenical partnership which has been working together since 1977/78.

We have recently started to grow with 4 families joining us. Our 'fun club' for children up to 12 years of age meets in church on a weekly basis at the same time as Morning worship.

We hold a variety of services equally divided between Methodist and Church of England; these meet the needs of most of the congregation. We feel confident in experimenting with differing types of services.

At St Mary's Orlestone, there is a service held once a month, and the church buildings and grounds are cared for by the Friends of St Mary's.

We have a variety of musical talents within the congregation.

There are 3 independent cell groups, these have others within them who worship elsewhere in the Benefice, and we link with Ruckinge for some of our activities.

We are financially stable and are able to meet with both the Anglican share and the Methodist assessment.

We do not have a structured pastoral team but we do look after each other and have people within the church who visit elderly or others within the congregation needing support.

We have a 'WhatsApp' prayer chain where we share prayer requests.

Our hope is that the opportunities Hamstreet and Orlestone offer will inspire the right candidate.





# Saxon Shoreline Benefice

## HAMSTREET & ORLESTONE – CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD / ST MARY'S

### Church Outreach

The Parish is geographically divided into two:

- We regularly contribute to the Ashford Food Bank
- Recently Men in Sheds have approached us regarding meeting in the church hall
- Other groups use the church for quiz evenings
- We have held a 60's concert and have held various book sales
- At our popular Christmas Toy service the gifts we receive, are donated to Sure Start in Ashford.
- Every year we contribute to the Shoe Box Appeal, and we hold a coffee morning, proceeds from which support the Multiple Sclerosis Society.
- We are currently exploring adopting a charity, for us, to support as a church.
- We are on a continuing journey as Christians, which came about in the seventies with a vision of the then Archdeacon and the Superintendent Minister, who saw a way forward for the denominations to use the building to continue in the journey of One Church, One Faith, One Lord.
- This has led to one set of accounts, one group of people who would regard themselves as a group of Christians who are not Methodist, Anglican, Baptist, Salvation Army, Church of Scotland, Church of Wales, but as members of the Church of the Good Shepherd.





# Saxon Shoreline Benefice

## RUCKINGE – ST MARY MAGDALENE

### Parish

The Parish is geographically divided into two:

- Upper Ruckinge, basically one long road with a community hall, over a mile from -
- Lower Ruckinge – the village with the parish church. No longer has a shop or pub. There is a village hall with minimal use. We still have a Parish Council. The Church Hall has been sold and is now a holiday let. Scout & Guide HQ for Explorers, Scouts, Cubs, Beavers, Guides, Brownies and Rainbows.

### Pattern of Services

- 1st Sunday 10 a.m. Parish Communion (CW) – sometimes 10:30 a.m.
- 2nd Sunday 10 a.m. Family Service – Lay led
- 3rd Sunday 10 a.m. Mattins (BCP) – Lay led
- 4th Sunday 8:30 a.m. Holy Communion (BCP) – (said)





# Saxon Shoreline Benefice

## RUCKINGE – ST MARY MAGDALENE

### During the year

- St George's Day and Remembrance Day services attended by Scouts and Guides, etc., alternating with Warehorne every other year.
- Ash Wednesday – evening Communion with Ashing.
- Mothering Sunday – Food for Thought gathering – bacon butties and pause for thought – lay led.
- Palm Sunday – procession into church with donkeys, who remain for the whole service.
- Good Friday – the Last Hour
- St Mary Magdalene Day – evening service followed by supper
- Christmas Eve - 3.30 p.m. Prams and Grans service for under-5s and the older generation. 6 p.m. Candle-lit Crib service – Readings and Carols, with varied participation (attendance always 180+).

### Activities

- Saturday morning Coffee Mornings in the church from end April to September. Some mornings are run by others for various charities. A good community spirit with usually at least 25 people attending.
- Flower Festival every other year (usually in June) over a Saturday and Sunday.
- Friends of Kent Churches Ride and Stride day (in September) open all day for refreshments, lunches and teas.
- Warm-Up for Christmas on 1st Saturday in December for hot soup and buns, etc.





# Saxon Shoreline Benefice

## RUCKINGE – ST MARY MAGDALENE

### Music

We have no choir, but one excellent organist (and occasional assistants) who leads the congregation in good quality singing. (Even with no organist, singing is strong.) Once or twice a year, concerts are held – usually attracting full houses.

### Bellringers

A peal of five bells is rung on special occasions by a practiced team of ringers (who also ring in other local churches). A small team of new volunteer ringers is being trained.

### Church Building & Churchyard

Inside cleaned regularly by a rota of volunteers. Church is decorated with flowers again on a rota.

The Churchyard is well-maintained by a willing team of volunteers.

### Future Building Improvement Works

A project is well under way to install a new kitchenette in the church, with improvements in the ground floor of the tower to provide better storage space, a new vestry and a disabled-access toilet.

Improved entry path from the road to the main (north) door is also planned.

The project includes new heating arrangements within the church, and improved lighting and a simple sound amplification scheme.





# Saxon Shoreline Benefice

## WAREHORNE – ST MATTHEW’S

### Village

The parish of Warehorne lies within a farming area on the edge of the Saxon Shoreline overlooking Romney Marsh and is a widespread, supportive community of about 370 with a mixture of backgrounds, ages and occupations.

### The Church in the Community

St Matthew’s Church stands at the centre of the village and this is how the members of the PCC see themselves, actively participating in various community activities, offering support and prayer in time of trouble, or rejoicing with them on joyous occasions.

There is a good relationship between church and community with St Matthews being used for both sacred and secular activities.

Second-hand books are available bringing in donations and providing an opportunity for visitors and local folk to come into church where they will find aids to prayer.

The church hosts the very popular West End Comes to Warehorne annual show raising money for local causes. An enthusiastic village hall committee organizes many village activities.

*St Matthew’s stands at the heart of the actively supportive community of Warehorne.*

*A church open to all ages: to share fellowship in the love of God; join together in thoughtful worship; come to in times of joyous celebration; when troubled or sad; in need of quiet prayer or support in prayer; if wanting to explore faith or seeking a deeper meaning to life.*





# Saxon Shoreline Benefice

## WAREHORNE – ST MATTHEW’S

### Services

Each month we hold two services of Holy Communion and one Evensong, sometimes lay led, all according to the Book of Common Prayer with Lectionary readings. A lay led, monthly, all age family service, planned by the Warehorne Mission Leadership Team, follows a less formal structure with modern hymns, a story, activity and prayer.

Festival services have been planned by the WMLT with the Rector on an all age worship basis and the Christmas and Easter morning services include Holy Communion. Collections from the festival services are donated to charities locally and abroad.

We invite the local Jump Singers to join us for the Harvest Festival and Carol Services. A children’s tableau is produced for the Carol Service, at which people from the community are invited to read the lessons.

### A Welcoming Church

The church is open daily, all day. It stands on the long-distance walks of the Saxon Shore Way and an ancient pilgrimage route from Southampton to Canterbury. Pilgrims are welcome to stay overnight in the church, using the toilet and kitchenette facilities and probably the popular Woolpack Inn opposite.

### Local School Connection

Several people from the community either teach or assist at the neighboring village’s infant and junior school from which around 90 children walked to the church to learn more about the building, what happens there and to offer their pre-prepared prayers.



# Saxon Shoreline Benefice

## WAREHORNE – ST MATTHEW’S

### The PCC

The PCC works well as a team with some members having many years’ experience. It adopts a can-do attitude. It is financially self-sufficient and current its fundraising ability is good. The church donates food and toiletries to the Ashford food bank.

### The Church Within the Benefice

St George’s Day and Remembrance Day services are shared on alternate years with the church in Ruckinge.

We hold a monthly Songful Benefice gathering for the joy of singing together traditional hymns and learning new ones, allowing people to share their thoughts on the words, a poem, picture or memories the hymns evoke.

The congregation is invited to attend two cell groups in Hamstreet, a monthly Benefice Prayer Breakfast and the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in the month combined Benefice service, hosting of which is shared amongst the churches.

### Church Building

The much loved Grade 1 listed church is in good condition for a 13<sup>th</sup> century building and under the experienced treasurer’s guidance, any Quinquennial recommendations are gradually met, with no current urgent issues. We have six bells and welcome visiting bell ringers. The church also has a large churchyard, the old part of which is grazed by sheep.





# Saxon Shoreline Benefice

## WAREHORNE – ST MATTHEW'S

### The Future

Newly installed electric heaters in the box pews, will be an encouragement to winter congregations

We look forward to the arrival of a new incumbent to help deepen our faith, encourage our prayer life and join us in helping others to experience the power and joy in the love of God.

