

The Benefice of King's Wood

St Cosmas & St Damian Challock

St Mary Chilham

St Mary the Virgin Crundale

St Lawrence the Martyr Godmersham

St Peter Molash

2024

Rector



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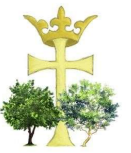
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Vision and Values

**We have a vision and have expressed our values.
We are seeking a priest to help us fulfil them.**

Our Vision:

Going forward with Jesus, we seek to be:
A valued presence in our communities
A place where everyone can belong and be loved
A place to find peace and to find God

Our Values:

We are churches that are part of the community
We are churches that are homes for people of all ages
We are churches that care for people
We are churches that meet spiritual needs

Could you be the inspiring leader who helps us answer these questions?

- How well do our actions and attitudes reflect our vision and values?
- Are our current initiatives appropriate, balanced and realistic?
- Are we playing to our individual church strengths AND sharing mission?
- What have we not asked ourselves?

In order to answer these questions and lead our Benefice in the next stage of its mission and ministry, we think we need a Rector with the following skills and qualities.

Someone who has a heart for:

- Evangelism, teaching and preaching, with pastoral care a priority
- Ministry in the wider community; a welcoming presence for our neighbours
- Enabling the people of God to live out their faith throughout the week
- Supporting and advising our lay service leaders

A team player and leader who has:

- Great people skills, being an enabler, encourager and listener
- The ability to inspire and motivate
- A genuinely affirming attitude to different styles of worship
- The insight to help bring cohesion across the Benefice
- Energy and vision to share the love of God with our communities, especially our children and young people

This will mean being a visible presence in our communities, involved in local events.



About the Benefice

Our benefice was formed in 2012, bringing together the churches of Chilham, Molash, Challock, Godmersham and Crundale. Although this seems a long time ago now it has taken time for individual churches to become confident that their unique character and contribution to Christian life in the area is secure under the benefice structure; and to recognise that this structure can feel of value when we meet up and work together. Now all who have responsibility for the vision, worship and mission in their own church have met regularly to make sure that first, this profile reflects their own churches' views, and second that continuing into the future each church has an equal voice in the way forward as a benefice.

In order to share fellowship, learn from one another and encourage good communication across the benefice, we (the churchwardens and other key people) have recently started to meet as a benefice group to discuss projects, share information and to find new ways to move forward together. We hope that the new incumbent will be keen to continue with and develop this practice, and, in a way, these meetings will be more important in our corporate life than the individual PCC meetings because this is where we will focus on strategy and growth rather than practical, local issues.

It's possible to maintain a way of working with one full-time priest in this benefice. That priest will have the support of local and retired clergy, lay support and two ALMs. Also the deanery has a reader who has been willing to take non-eucharistic services regularly in this benefice as well as going to the village hall in Old Wives Lees to support there. She also has an important funeral ministry.



Benefice administration: we are fortunate to employ an enthusiastic part-time administrator for 7 hours per week. She takes care of the administrative function for the whole benefice, and is a single point of contact for the diocese.

Safeguarding: The King's Wood Benefice is committed to providing a safe environment for everyone in our communities and we will adhere to the House of Bishops Safeguarding policies. The benefice has two safeguarding officers who work closely with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser. All the PCCs have formally adopted the Safeguarding Policy and PCC members are undertaking as a minimum the basic level of training required. Further records of training and qualifications held are maintained by our Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.



Some Basic Statistics

Table 1

	Electoral Roll 2022	USA 2022	Services monthly	Baptisms 2022	Weddings 2022	Funerals 2022	Population 2021
Challock	38	12	2	0	3	1	1100
Chilham	39	27	4	12	7	11	1800
Crundale	21	7	3	2	0	2	200
Godmersham	39	20	2	3	1	2	360
Molash	37	12	2	0	0	7	240
OWL	n/a	25	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

The Wider Church

King's Wood Benefice is part of the Stour Valley Deanery and the Diocese of Canterbury. It can be seen that our vision and values very much reflect the diocese's Three Bold Outcomes. Our deanery sees its primary role as supporting and encouraging the benefices. The deanery leadership has been integrally involved in the process of building our vision and values.

Over recent years we have been increasingly involved with the wider church and are eager for that perspective to be continued. As can be seen in Part 2 of this profile a number of our churches have overseas links.

Benefice Service Pattern

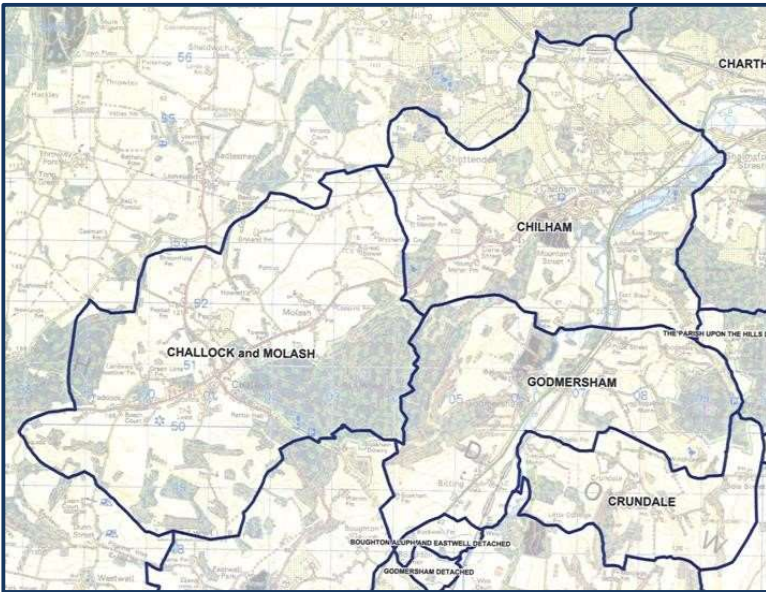
Table 2

Church	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Challock	Priest		Lay-led	
Chilham	Priest	Lay	Priest	
Old Wives Lees				Lay/Priest/Reader
Crundale	Lay-led		Priest	
Godmersham		Lay-led		Priest
Molash		Priest		Lay (+Reader)

When there is a week 5, we have a Benefice Service rotating between the churches.



A Description of the Area



Situated just a few miles from the cathedral city of Canterbury and the market town of Ashford, the Benefice of King's Wood includes the five churches of Challock, Chilham, Crundale, Godmersham and Molash. Challock & Molash form one parish and within Chilham parish is the settlement of Old Wives Lees where the monthly service is held.

The area has a rich history with Chilham Castle playing prominent role. Jane Austen was a frequent visitor to Godmersham and King Henry VIII is said

to have hunted in the 1500 acres of woodland, named 'the King's Wood'. Visitors flock to these woods at bluebell time; the woods are also home to many animals such as deer, badgers and foxes.

Three of the four parishes in the King's Wood Benefice have part of these famous woods within their boundaries; the fourth, Crundale, occupies a downland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. With a range of trails, footpaths and a national cycling route, the area is popular with walkers and cyclists alike. There are significant leisure facilities in Ashford and Canterbury and more modest ones locally especially in Chilham and Challock. Local village halls hold a range of activities; the one in Old Wives Lees is used for a monthly all-age service.

The area has good transport links – there is a train station at Chilham with regular links to London via the high speed train from both Ashford and Canterbury. There is a regular bus service serving Chilham and Godmersham to Canterbury and Ashford.

The benefice falls within Ashford Borough Council. Hospitals are located at Ashford and Canterbury and there are two GP surgeries in Chartham. Parishioners in other parts of the benefice attend surgeries in Chartham, Charing and Wye.

There is a Church Primary school in Chilham and a Community Primary in Challock, both of which have a high reputation and good contacts with our benefice. There are easy links to secondary schools (grammar schools, high schools and academies) in both Canterbury and Ashford. There are also several tertiary educational establishments in Canterbury.

Chilham Primary School





The population within the four parishes is about 3800 (See table 1). Residents include commuters and also families who have lived in the area for generations. A range of socio-economic groups are reflected in the population. Local people are proud of their villages, their history and their heritage. There has been modest housing development in Chilham and a more significant one is currently taking place in Challock.

The Vicarage

The 1970s Benefice Vicarage is located at 3, Hambrook Close, Chilham in a quiet cul-de-sac. It is within a few minutes' walk from Chilham village centre, church and school. The farthest points of the Benefice are little more than a ten minute drive away.

The vicarage itself has a drive for 2/3 cars and a medium sized garden largely laid to lawn, and there is a garage adjacent to the property. The house has four bedrooms, with a family bathroom and an en-suite bathroom with the largest bedroom. Downstairs a study with cloakroom comes immediately off the entrance hall. There are two reception rooms and, beyond the kitchen, a utility room.



Our schools

As a Benefice we feel strongly that we should make sure that the two schools feel supported by us. So before writing the profile they were both contacted and asked to help us include in the profile what they thought would be the right person to appoint. The R. E. coordinator in Challock said that the school had loved having the last incumbent visiting their school and that the children had enjoyed her assemblies. They hoped that a new incumbent could continue with an assembly every short term, that is six a year. And also that if they were appointing a new incumbent they would be looking for someone who could relate well to children.

As a Church of England school Chilham's reply was more involved. Leaders there feel that they need an incumbent who spends time in the school, interacting with both children and staff. They felt that an assembly once a week led by the new incumbent would help quickly build strong relationships between



parents and children and the church. This would further be improved if more regular visits to the church were facilitated. They thought it would be lovely to have someone who saw it as part of their role to support them visibly and proactively through their journey of spiritual development. Finally they would be grateful if the new incumbent was also prepared to support their worship leaders on a regular basis to give them more opportunities to engage and participate in church services.

Our Church Communities

The Parish Church of St Cosmas and St Damian, Challock

The Wider Community

Challock is a popular and rapidly growing village, inhabited by a mixture of long-standing residents and families moving in more recently. A considerable amount of new housing has been built in the last few years, with further development considered in the village plan through to 2030. The population currently stands at around 1,100.

The large village green provides a focal point where local children play, and dogs are walked. The Methodist Chapel sits facing the green. Nearby is a barn shop selling local produce, a modern village hall, children's playground, and a cricket field. The church is located approximately 1 mile from the village, down a narrow lane.

Our Worshipping Community

In 2023 normal Sunday services were attended by an average of 12 adults (but no children); although there is a wide variation. Special service attendances in 2023 were: Easter (held in Molash), Mothering Sunday 27, Remembrance Day 50, Christingle 105, and Christmas 48. Challock Church offers a range of services throughout the year with a service held in the church on two Sunday mornings per month. We have one communion service each month and one non-communion service led by lay leaders.

The PCC encourages the use of the church for concerts, lectures, and festivals. In 2023 the PCC and the Friends of Challock Church held the annual Flower Festival over August Bank Holiday weekend, which was attended by hundreds from the local community and beyond. The February Snowdrop Teas and the May Five Church Walk were also popular and drew many people to the church.



Helping those in need is a demonstration of our faith. Whilst we are a small church and very pressed to keep going financially, we annually support Combat Stress (the ex-servicemen's charity) and the Children's Society.

We carry the word of God into our community by contact with our neighbours, and by example. We produce a monthly Parish Magazine jointly with the secular Parish Council which is delivered free to every home in the parish. This carries the Christian message and advertises our services and events. We are indebted to



many villagers who are not regular church goers, but who give time, energy, and money to our activities. These contacts are invaluable and spread the outreach of the church wider than just church members and their families. There is a reserve of goodwill towards our church in the community that has been built up over years of caring at large.



We work closely with the Challock Methodist Chapel and hold joint services with them several times a year. Our church religious services are open to all who are very welcome. We have a Remembrance service, held at the war memorial in the centre of the village, on 11 November each year which is regularly attended by children from the school.

Our fund-raising year commences with serving tea and cakes in February (Snowdrop Teas) encouraging villagers to come to see the snowdrops in our churchyard. In May, tea and cakes are again offered

to participants in the Five Church Walk, a charity event in which participants walk between churches in and around our benefice. A flower festival is held in the Church over the August bank holiday weekend which is a major contributor to our finances and a happy occasion for villagers to meet. Other events are held on an occasional basis. These fundraising events help to place the church at the centre of the village and raise much needed funds.

Our Resources

Our church building is listed Grade II* – ID number 1185088 on the listed buildings register. It is famous for its unique modern murals and many visitors from around the world come to see these and to enjoy the peace and tranquillity in its remote North Downs setting. Following the reconstruction of the church from war damage, the first modern mural was painted in 1953, the ‘Lives of St Cosmos and St Damian’ in the Lady Chapel by Rosemary Aldridge and Doreen Lister. The success of their efforts prompted the later murals by John Ward RA and Gordon Davies. John and Gordon painted the Chancel ‘Life of Christ’ in 1956, and in 1999/2000 they painted the ‘Millennium Mural’ on the north wall.



Our Architect, Mr Roger Joyce, provides advice and reports fully on the condition of the structure every five years through the Quinquennial survey, which was last undertaken in 2022. In his report there were no major matters for concern and all items for action will be dealt with in order of urgency as indicated therein. Between the PCC and the Friends of Challock Church we are constantly working to maintain and preserve the church and several major projects have been undertaken in recent years. Most recently we have replaced all the chairs in the church and are currently working on replacing the West door of the church.



The Friends of Challock Church commenced operations in 2003; they assist the PCC by raising funds as requested by the PCC, to ensure the maintenance, security, and repair of the fabric of the church buildings and churchyard. The Friends of Challock Church are made up of annual subscription-paying members who elect a committee at their AGM. The priest of St Cosmas and St Damian church is the President of the Friends of Challock Church. A member of the PCC is appointed to sit on the Friends of Challock Church committee to act as a liaison. The accounts of the Friends of Challock Church are consolidated with those of the Challock PCC.

We have paid our Parish Share for 2023. Income is usually made up of regular givers, restricted donations, grants, and local fundraising events. The money in the bank raised by the Friends is restricted for predetermined purposes.

The Parish of St Mary, Chilham

The Wider Community

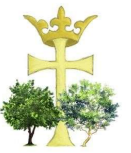
The parish of Chilham lies in the middle of the benefice, being mid-way between Canterbury and Ashford, overlooking and running along part of the Stour Valley. The parish incorporates the villages of Chilham and Old Wives Lees and the hamlet of Shottenden. At Old Wives Lees, there is monthly worship that worshipping community has contributed a separate section to this profile.

We have a wide social and age mix. Numbers are fairly static, although there has been some modest housing development. In Chilham village centre there is a Post Office/shop, two pubs, tea shop, wine bar, castle and a Church of England Primary School. On the outer edges are the village hall and sports centre. There are several local organisations including Rainbows and Brownies.

Chilham is a much visited, picturesque village on the Pilgrim's Way to Canterbury and has been used as a film location on a number of occasions. The Square gets used for some community events such as fayres and carol services.

Our Worshipping Community

Over recent years the regular Sunday congregation has steadily declined, so that on an ordinary Sunday it has averaged no more than about 25 of us. On special services this is much increased, for instance Remembrance Sundays past 280/200/158. This indicates the possible challenges for us. There are many on the fringes of our church with whom we would love to engage more regularly and draw into our worshipping community.



Last year we formed a baby and toddler group which meets weekly and is led by two of our lay members. Encouragingly this now has a steady core of parents and children attending from Chilham and surrounding areas. We hold an annual Christmas tree festival which is very popular and in 2023 raised about £2000 for Pastos Verdes and Catching Lives.

All of these activities suggest that there is a potential for growth. We would welcome the insight and energy of a new priest to work alongside us in evaluating the way we try to draw in our wider community, whilst leading our congregation in satisfying worship.

There are many groups and individuals contributing to our worship and the maintenance of both the church and churchyard. In 2018 The Friends of St Mary was reformed and holds social and fund raising events. There are 62 members who commit to an annual subscription.

The church is popular for occasional offices, with many who are married returning for their children's baptisms. We have a church choir, there is a dedicated small team of flower arrangers (we have had three flower festivals in the last few years – very popular). We also have a fine band of bell ringers who ring for most services and weddings.

This is a relatively small community and we are pleased to play a significant role in its life. Our church is used for a range of purposes including large public meetings and consultation exercises. It is an ideal venue for concerts organised by ourselves or others.



We enjoy an excellent relationship with St Marys C of E Primary School, which is located at the opposite end of the square to the church. The school makes good use of the church, school services are held as well as class celebrations and educational visits. The Rector would be an ex-officio governor.

The local Parish News is a St Mary publication with a distribution list of over 400. It is another way for us to be at the centre of parish life and PCC funds benefit from the profit it generates.

We support the work of the Christian charity Pastos Verdes, which serves the community of Lichinga in Mozambique. The organisation provides a range of services and facilities, including a children's home.



Our Resources



Our building is a much loved beautiful place of prayer and worship, dating in part possibly from the thirteenth century. It is in generally good condition externally and internally, funding for which relies heavily on our Friends organisation. In 2006 a significant re-ordering introduced a nave altar and saw the transfer of the font to a location near the centre of worship. The church is large for the size of the village, with some significant monuments, both of these features relate to its association with Chilham Castle. Thanks to generous bequests the long-term financial future of the church is secure.

Old Wives Lees Community Church

Old Wives Community worship takes place on the fourth Sunday of every month in the Village Hall at Old Wives Lees and has been doing so for the last thirty years.



We are actively involved in encouraging and supporting community events in order to help strengthen our community.

There is a small group of us that meets monthly to pray and plan for our next service.

Our services are inclusive and informal and we have been encouraged to see that our congregation continues to

grow.

There is a small group of children who started with us at pre-school age and are now going to secondary school. We provide activities based on the theme of the service. There is live music provided by our worship group that accompanies our singing of hymns and worship songs.

Each month there is a collection for a local food bank which is well supported by us and others in the village too.



Annually we have an informal AGM during the service where we look back over the past year and consider the future and our possible role in it. We also consider how our income from the collections should be spent. This is shared between St Mary's Chilham, Old Wives Lees Village Hall and Pastos Verdes, a Christian organisation working in Mozambique. At last year's meeting it was decided that a donation should be made to a new youth club in Chilham to encourage and support their work.



The incumbent has in the past come up to lead a communion service and we have also been pleased to welcome the Reader on a number of occasions.

We would value the input of our new incumbent in supporting our work and helping us to find ways to develop our mission and vision further.

The Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin Crundale

The Wider Community

The parish of Crundale comprises just over 648 hectares (1,600 acres) in the North Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, in two valleys divided by a ridge on which stands the eleventh-century parish church. Crundale is a scattered rural community spread over these valleys and the adjacent hills. The church's isolation may be indicative of a pre-Augustinian site of pagan worship in Saxon times.

The parish is mainly farmland with the main farms being Hunt Street Farm and parts of three estates (Crundale House, Coombe Manor & Olantigh) which

Crundale – "a small community with a big heart"



Sketch by R. Goodenough



employ tractor drivers, shepherds, gamekeepers and stockmen. There is also an organic vegetable farm (Ripple Farm Organics) and a commercial lime works. Many of the residents are retired or work away from the village, in nearby Canterbury or Ashford or commute up to London on the high-speed train from Wye or Ashford. There are two private equestrian establishments in the village. In Sole Street there is a pub, The Compasses Inn, which has recently changed hands; we hope that it will become a centre for the community once again. The churchyard is officially designated as a Kent Wildlife site. There is a shared, modern well-equipped village hall situated in Godmersham, which is used by the shared Women's Institute and Godmersham and Crundale Gardeners Association.



Our Worshipping Community

In terms of population, Crundale is the smallest of the parishes in the King's Wood Benefice; there were 201 people at the 2021 census. Though the average congregation has fallen to seven, it was ten for many decades, and the church of St Mary the Blessed Virgin is much loved and well supported by the residents of Crundale. There is a real sense of ownership. The village population has changed recently from having a large proportion of elderly residents to being home to many more families with children. There is a great community spirit which is helped by everyone's involvement with the Crundale Fair, held in June every other year, to raise funds for the church. This community spirit means that people in need are identified and given support by their neighbours. Since the change in the pattern of services,



the PCC has been actively trying to build further links with those who tend not to come to church. As many people in the village help to clean the church and do the flowers on a weekly rota, a 'Thank You Party' is held each February so the PCC can show their appreciation. Harvest Festival in October is one of our big events, and many people from the village get involved. We have found that personal invitations to special services brings a good response and so in 2023 we held our second Service to Remember Lost Loved Ones. We intend to do more to engage the children and their families as we had a splendid response to our 2023 Christingle service with 23 children attending.

At Rogation time we have a shorter service followed by a walk around the parish, which is well attended. Being in beautiful, hilly countryside means that a lot of walkers, cyclists and horseriders come past our church and we would like to hold more special services for these groups. We have developed an email list so that we can inform everyone what is going on in our church. The congregation has lost several members recently and the rest are older residents of the village but we hope that we can recruit new active members from our community.



Our church attracts a lot of visitors to its peaceful location, many of whom write in our visitors' book about its tranquility and are grateful that our church is always open for them. As the church is the only public space in the village, we are now holding our quarterly parish meetings there in the warmer months and are offering resuscitation training sessions too. One of our congregation organises candle-lit classical concerts, with world-class performers, each September to raise funds for the church and sometimes an additional Christmas concert for the sheer joy of music in our

church. Once again, many locals are involved as helpers on these occasions.



There is a historical link with Godmersham and so some special services are shared, for example Remembrance Sunday, we join with them to worship, alternating churches each year, Crundale holds a Christingle Service at the beginning of Advent and Godmersham holds a Crib Service on Christmas Eve.

Pattern of Services at the present though this is under review:

- 1st Sunday – 9:30am Lay-led Morning Worship alternating with Matins
- 3rd Sunday – Holy Communion (BCP/CW alternate months)
- 5th Sunday 11am – Benefice Service rotating between churches

Our Resources



Our eleventh-century church is in good condition, having had a lot of work done to the roof over the last few years. One of the recent developments has been the instalment of infra-red heating. There is a toilet and small kitchen area within the church which we felt was essential for a contemporary place of worship, which is supplied with rainwater from the church roof though our aspiration is a mains water supply. However, the last Quinquennial survey did identify a problem with death watch beetle and there is some debate about how to deal with it.

The family of a previous church warden commissioned a new stained-glass window of which we are very proud. An unusual feature is the mounting block and vicar's stable (now used for storage) next to the entrance gate of the churchyard. The churchyard has been designated a Local Wildlife Site by the Kent Wildlife Trust and contains one of the best selections of lichens in the county.

In the recent past the church has benefitted from several bequests which have allowed us to do work on the church. The Crundale Fair and concerts are a very important source of income though we have a list of regular donors. As we realise that our income needs to be secure, we plan to run a Time and Talents scheme, which will include a request for donors to review their donations. To date, we have always paid our Parish Share on time, so that we can get the discount available.

The Parish of St Lawrence the Martyr, Godmersham

The Wider Community

The parish is located overlooking the Great Stour River and includes both Godmersham and the village of Bilting. We are a small linear parish with no public amenities or shops and have only the village hall and church as focal points for community life. We share the village hall with Crundale parish.

Members of the church get involved in activities at the village hall, which hosts a regular gardeners' meetings, Women's Institute, flower arranging classes, Brownies, and fitness classes. Quiz nights, music events, entertainment and seasonal bbqs also take place.



Godmersham church is occasionally used to host concerts or an evening lecture, and our involvement in the local community is reciprocated when the wider community has helped the church with successful Flower Festivals and a Fete. We are very much looking forward to building on our local talents and hosting a craft and flower festival in 2024. Godmersham and Crundale churches combine to produce a monthly magazine distributed throughout both parishes.



Godmersham Park House was built in 1732 and eventually became the property of Edward Knight, brother of Jane Austen. Her novels *Pride & Prejudice* and *Mansfield Park* are said to depict characters and scenes from the village.

Godmersham Park House now accommodates the ABDO (Dispensing Opticians) College, which, together with Godmersham Park Estate, are the biggest employers locally. There are a few very small businesses, and most inhabitants of working age commute outside the area by car.

Our Worshipping Community

We usually have two services per month. One is a communion service on the fourth Sunday of the month (alternating either Common Worship or Iona) and one lay-led service on the second Sunday (usually a Celtic morning worship). Home communion has been offered in the past and taken to anyone who cannot attend church, usually by our ALMs. There are several members willing to lead the lay-led services, and we are blessed with three capable organists. Additional services for festivals such as Easter, Christmas, Mothering Sunday, Harvest etc. are held, as well as a rotating benefice service when there is a fifth Sunday in the month. We hold an Easter day sunrise service with Crundale church, with whom we have shared Christingle, Remembrance Day and the Rogation Walk. Children from both parishes take part in the annual crib service in Godmersham on Christmas Eve, and our last crib service recorded 22 children and over a hundred adults.



Our PCC meets approximately every three months and our churchwardens meet with others in the Benefice to share thoughts and plans. Our church community has a core of mainly retired villagers who are willing helpers, but who are looking forward to working with a new priest to build the church family and particularly younger members.

Our PCC meets approximately every three months and our churchwardens meet with others in the Benefice to share thoughts and plans. Our church community has a core of mainly retired villagers who are willing helpers, but who are looking forward to working with a new priest to build the church family and particularly younger members.

St Lawrence runs its own Lent course combined with a shared supper and folk from elsewhere in the benefice are welcome to join with us,

We are quite a scattered linear community and have few local amenities, therefore meeting and communicating with individuals has been a challenge. However we have recently initiated a weekly coffee morning in the church which is open to any in the benefice and offers people the chance to share and chat



together, have a singalong or maybe try some craft. Our numbers attending church have declined since the pandemic and we are keen to see a revival of interest, although some folk feel that they are left to shoulder most of the responsibility and work. There has not been a serious attempt at engaging with the larger community for many years but there is an element of folk who would like to see more happening with ministry and outreach.

St Lawrence is one of the five churches involved with the Five Church Walk, which is a good source of income for the church with the catering opportunities it provides. It is hoped that in 2024 we will add a children's version at Godmersham with some child friendly activities to mark the event's fortieth anniversary. Church members also provide coffee and cakes to the Godmersham House Open gardens events and this is also appreciated. The church has responded to Pilgrim's requests for camping in the building and we are considering whether becoming a camping church may be a beneficial move because we are close to Canterbury and in an area of outstanding natural beauty.

As a church we are experimenting with possibilities of reintroducing puppet ministry in order to engage more younger members and we would like to expand our small band who have played at local events and some services in the past. Like many churches fundraising is necessary and we have on some occasions failed to meet all our parish share.

We try to support local charities with donations at Christmas and other special occasions. Godmersham has a Trust Fund (Godmersham in Need – Finches Trust) which is used to provide and pay for lifelines to the elderly and donations towards books for young people leaving to go to university. The Priest-in-Charge would become a trustee of this charity.

Parish resources

The ancient parish church is dedicated to St Lawrence the Martyr. It is a moderately large church with a long single aisle chancel divided from the nave by an open rood screen. To the south side of the nave is an aisle and transept and to the north of the crossing is an unusual early medieval vaulted, apse chapel under and to the east of the base of the tower.



It is part Saxon, part Norman and underwent major restoration in 1864; it dates back to the eleventh century and was owned by the Archbishop of Canterbury. In the Domesday Book it is mentioned as Gomersham. Canterbury Cathedral Priory held the church at the time of the Reformation and throughout the centuries there have been several changes to the buildings.

The chancel and nave are late Saxon, and in the chancel is a twelfth-century bas-relief thought to be of Thomas a Becket; this is considered to be one of the earliest likenesses of Becket. The blocked west door has a tympanum of reused Norman stone showing traditional dog-tooth carving. Within the church is a memorial to Thomas Knight, who gifted the Godmersham House and estate to Edward Austen Knight. Jane Austen was a frequent visitor to her brother Edward, and regularly worshipped in the church.

The building is in very good condition and is supported by the community, with an active and successful 'Friends of Godmersham Church', who provide financial support for the upkeep of the church fabric



The church attracts several visitors and is left open throughout the day.

Finance – In the past Godmersham has been unable to fully pay its parish share to the diocese. However, we are pursuing ways of fund raising and are ambitious to increase our membership.

Our links with JASNA (Jane Austen Society of North America) has resulted in us receiving some small donations as well.

The Parish Church of St Peter Molash

The Wider Community

The village of Molash lies high on the North Downs between Canterbury, Maidstone, Faversham and Ashford on the A252. The M20 and M2 motorways are close by and there are frequent trains running to London including the High Speed Link from Ashford. There are two buses a day that run to Canterbury from the village, but only during school term time. There is no bus service from the village during school holidays.

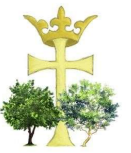
The village of Molash has no school with the nearest primary schools being in Chilham and Challock. Secondary/Grammar Schools are at Kennington, Ashford, Canterbury and Faversham with a local bus operator serving all.

Our Worshipping Community

The Church of Saint Peter (St. Peter's) endeavours to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through worship and prayer with the provision, when and where required, of pastoral care. Currently St. Peter's has two services every month. The second Sunday is Priest-Led Holy Communion and the fourth Sunday in the month has a lay-led service. We also have a Harvest Festival Service, Christmas Carol Service, a Christmas Day Communion and services on Good Friday and Easter Sunday.



Our aim is to continue to build our worshipping family by reaching those who are not regular church-goers. We will strive to encourage more to attend our services and are starting to reach more young families from the village including the neighbouring Hamlet of Shottenden, but the main congregation currently consists of the not so young generation. We have a strong, albeit small group that continue to support St. Peter's. This strong core has kept the church going, especially during the last thirty years, and prevented the closure of the church when it had poor attendance.



Our Resources



The Church of St Peter used to be a chapelry. The church as it stands dates from the early thirteenth century and is a classic rural 'barn church' with a chancel and large open nave, and traces of medieval wall paintings. The pews in the nave are moveable, and are repositioned for special occasions such as concerts.

St. Peter's churchyard is divided into an open and closed section. The closed area is maintained by Ashford Borough Council, with the open maintained at our expense. Within the closed section there are several ancient yew trees thought to be at least

two thousand years old all, of which have a Preservation Order thereon.

Finance – Our finances are sound, but rely heavily on fundraising, principally from two main fundraising events. We have an annual horse ride, the Blossom Ride, covering around ten miles of wonderful countryside. This event attracts riders from as far afield as south London and the Weald of Kent, including Rye and Hastings in Sussex. Many villagers help with this event and the profit made from this ride goes

toward the everyday running of the church.



There is also an annual walk, usually held on the first Bank Holiday Monday in May. This is called the Five Church Walk and entrants can start and finish at any participating church (Molash, Chilham, Godmersham, Challock and Boughton Aluph).

Walkers donate entry or sponsorship

money and money goes to the churches, Pilgrims Hospice or the Air Ambulance. Each Church provides refreshments which also generates profit.

Appendix A: Stour Valley Deanery

Stour Valley Deanery is small and rural. Part of the Archdeaconry of Canterbury, it stretches from the outskirts of Canterbury to the outskirts of Ashford, along the Stour Valley but also across the downland on either side. We straddle three parliamentary constituencies and three local councils (Ashford Borough, Canterbury City and Shepway District). The largest communities are Chartham and Wye, and the seventeen worshipping communities are grouped into two benefices and one parish (the United Wye Benefice, King's Wood and Chartham). Each benefice has a full-time stipendiary priest; the Wye benefice



also has two part-time priests, one stipendiary, the other non-stipendiary; Chartham has a 0.5 FTE priest. We work very closely with our neighbouring deanery of East Bridge and the two Clergy Chapters usually meet together and run popular Marriage Preparation days together. The Area Dean is the Rev Ravi Holy, Rector of the Wye Benefice.

The deanery typically holds two or three meetings a year. These are usually open meetings with a speaker and a topic of interest to our rural congregations; each meeting concludes with a short business meeting for elected Synod representatives. In between, the Deanery Mission and Ministry Committee meets to discuss matters of strategy, mission imperatives, and financial issues.

Stour Valley supports this appointment wholeheartedly, and we look forward to welcoming our new colleague.

Revd Ravi Holy, Area Dean

Caroline Knight, Lay Chair of Deanery Synod

Appendix B: A Message from the Bishop of Dover



Welcome and thank you for taking an interest in the role of Rector of the Kings Wood Benefice. The Parish Profile sets out the needs and priorities of the parishes, their shared Person Specification will give you an idea of the kind of priest they are looking for.

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. In 2023, Diocesan Synod agreed to three bold outcomes which flesh out how our vision will be achieved by 2030.

Three Bold Outcomes

1. Double the number of children and young disciples.
2. 200 new Christian communities.
3. Every parish, benefice and deanery showing signs of revitalisation.

Every deanery is currently working on updating their deanery plans from the versions that fed into our 2022 strategy document [which you can find here](#). Our strategic planning across the diocese is a dynamic process - and it's exciting that parishes are considering our vision and the bold outcomes vision for themselves, exploring together what actions they will commit to take, what their local 'Therefore we will...' might look like.

As well as the three bold outcomes our diocesan synod has committed to a net zero carbon action plan. When General Synod and Diocesan Synod adopted this goal, it was clear that it would be very challenging. However, the significant changes in global weather events in recent years have underlined the urgency of tackling the amount of carbon we produce. The leadership shown by the Church of England is important and the action plan takes a positive approach to working towards this ambitious target.

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

Our Safeguarding Ethos

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



The Canterbury Diet for Incumbents and Priests in Charge

<p>After licensing the Incumbent meets with the Director of Mission & Ministry who introduces the priest to the</p> <p>Canterbury Diet and offers a</p> <p>Pastoral Supervisor with whom she/he meets not less than four times per year</p>	<p>Golden threads</p> <p>How are prayer and spiritual practices being developed? How am I learning and reflecting on ministry practice? How are we attending to good relationships and collaborative ministry?</p>
<p>Ministers acquire a</p> <p>Spiritual Accompanier and meet regularly, recommended 6-8 weekly</p>	
<p>In the first two years the Incumbent or Priest in Charge attends the</p> <p>Ministry Training Programme Monday to Friday residential courses generally held in Bruges Week One : The Minister as Learner (January, soon after licensing) Week Two: The Minister as Leader (June, of the same year) Week Three : The Minister as Missioner (January, the following year)</p>	
<p>Participation in the annual</p> <p>Ministerial Development Review Meet with Consultant Reviewer, complete a Personal Development Plan; meet with Archdeacon a year later and update the PDP, and so on, with opportunity to review Pastoral Supervision and Spiritual Accompaniment. Also meet with the bishop <u>during the course of the two-year cycle.</u></p>	
<p>As able, participate in professional ministry courses:</p> <p>Management Skills Course Working with Conflict Leading Change each a two by one day course, offered regularly at advertised times through the year</p>	
<p>Participation in four</p> <p>Wellbeing Courses <u>two hour</u> evening meetings, two offered per year</p>	
<p>Participate in relevant</p> <p>Continuing Ministry Development Events at advertised days and times</p>	



Appendix C: A note from the Archdeacon of Canterbury

Thank you for showing interest in the vacant post of Rector of the King's Wood Benefice. You will see from the Parish Profile that this rural benefice is made up of a number of churches which, though numerically small, really care for their communities, church life and the maintenance of their historic buildings. They have seen decline in recent years, but there is hope for recovery and growth. And this is where a new Rector will be able to make a difference.

The Diocese of Canterbury's three bold outcomes, as referred to in the Bishop's message above, are for each parish, benefice and deanery to show signs of revitalization, specifically by doubling the number of children and young disciples and by planting new Christian communities. There is no centrally imposed blueprint for how this will be achieved, but this benefice has the potential to grow and to experience the revitalization that we all hope to see.

The collection of villages with their churches (including the community at Old Wives Lees) each have their own character, traditions and styles. There are four PCCs (Challock and Molash is a single parish). One challenge for an incoming incumbent is to help the communities build on the initiatives that have started during this vacancy to meet together and to work together as a benefice. They have asked for an inspiring leader. The vision is for the churches in the benefice, through which pilgrims have journeyed for centuries, to be present in their communities, open and loving and places where an encounter with God may be had.

If you would like to have an informal conversation about the benefice, please do not hesitate to contact either of us. It's a great place to be and there's a real job to do. We wish you well in your discernment.



The Venerable Dr Will Adam
Archdeacon of Canterbury
archdeacon-canterbury@diocant.org



King's Wood Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Guide us in our search for a new Priest to minister here in our benefice of King's Wood.

Give to us all wisdom, an openness to your will and a clear focus to sustain our future and grow your church.

May we truly be a valued presence in our communities,

a place where everyone can belong and be loved,

and a place to find peace and to find God.

We pray for a priest to hear and respond to your call.

We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

