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# PARISH PROFILE CHIPPING ONGAR WITH SHELLEY 2025

Chipping Ongar with Shelley PCC

Registered Charity 1214524

Diocese of Chelmsford

Epping and Ongar Deanery





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# THE DIOCESE: A MESSAGE FROM BISHOP GULI

Covering Essex and East London, Chelmsford is one of the largest, most diverse and exciting dioceses in the Church of England. We are home to more than 3 million people representing many socio-economic, ethnic and faith groups and a fantastic variety of cultures and traditions.

We have enormous opportunities for mission and service and considerable challenges to face and resolve as we continue to deal with the long-term implications of the COVID-19 pandemic and global challenges that have a direct impact on our parish churches and the communities we serve.

My sense is that the whole Church of God is in a liminal season when we cannot clearly see the future and so don't quite know what it will look like. But we know that the Church has faced profound challenges in the past and as we look to the future we do so with faith that when we open ourselves up to being changed and transformed, we are best placed to serve God and God's people.

It is within this context and following a period of listening and discernment that started when I became Bishop of Chelmsford in 2021, that we have begun to articulate our future direction of travel as a Diocese with a focus on [travelling well together](#):

- Our purpose is to love God and to love our neighbour; to worship faithfully and empowered by the Holy Spirit, witness to the love of God revealed in Jesus Christ as we serve the extraordinarily diverse array of local communities in Essex and East London.
- Our approach is to enable and empower parishes and worshipping communities to discern how they are to be God's people in their own very different local contexts and as part of one diocesan family.
- Underpinning our approach is an invitation to a way of being articulated by shared diocesan values which might shape how we travel together, support each other and provide mutual accountability.

Since I became Bishop of Chelmsford, I have witnessed people's great warmth and I have seen first hand, the wonderful things going on in our parishes. Any new priest joining us in the Diocese of Chelmsford does so at a time of challenge, a time of change and most significantly a time of hope for our Church in this most diverse and exciting of dioceses.

**+Guli**

**Bishop of Chelmsford**



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# THE ONGAR MMU

The Ongar Mission and Ministry Unit (MMU) consists of 17 churches in and around the small market town of Chipping Ongar. Together with three other churches in the area it was once a Deanery in its own right and now sits within the wider deanery of Epping Forest and Ongar. Some of our churches are situated in the centre of our villages, some have very little housing or population near them. Nearly all of them are listed buildings.

The Clergy, Licensed Lay Ministers and laity of all the churches realise that to have positive and sustainable Christian ministry and mission in this area we must work together. No one church or licensed leader can do everything themselves. We can all learn from the gifts of others.

By the end of 2026 there will (including those with PTO) be 7 Clergy and 6 LLMs serving in the MMU. Our area has been very successful in raising up and supporting people in all forms of lay ministry and their contribution is highly valued.

Clergy and LLMs meet regularly to share news and make decisions about joint projects. We also meet together socially and in worship (at a monthly service). Likewise, Church Wardens and Treasurers are encouraged to co-operate and to share knowledge.

So we would welcome a colleague who is:

- Dedicated to working together in a team which values the gifts and traditions of different churchmanships
- An encourager of lay ministry
- Committed to discerning and raising vocations
- Willing to use their passions and gifts to resource the wider area
- Willing to embrace new and different expressions of church and ministry.

Revd John Fry

AREA DEAN



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# SERVICE PATTERN ST MARTIN'S

1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday	8.00 am	Holy Communion
	10.30 am	One Big Family service
2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday	10.30 am	Holy Communion
5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday	10.30 am	Holy Communion with prayer for healing
Wednesday	9 am	Morning Prayer
	10 am	Holy Communion



Above is a picture of buildings owned by the Joseph King Trust, for which our Priest in Charge is *ex officio* chair. This charity provides educational grants to under 25s and schools in the parish. We are also involved in Open the Book and other assemblies in the local primary schools and have begun to explore possible collaborations with The Ongar Academy.

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# ST MARTIN'S CHURCH IS GRADE 1 LISTED AND ST PETER'S IS GRADE 2 LISTED

St Martin's



St Peter's



# ABOUT OUR PARISH

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Chipping Ongar with Shelley is a very pleasant small country commuter town set in Essex 23 miles from central London. The parish is a warm and friendly place in which to live. The population at the last census was 4,843 with further extensive housing developments planned. About 53% of the residents are between the ages of 18 and 64, and 24% aged sixty-five and over.

The parish is bisected by the A414. To the north is Shelley, which has a proportion of housing association and council property. To the south is Chipping Ongar which has mainly owner-occupied property. In between is an attractive High Street, with library and supermarket plus many independent shops.

Larger towns of Chelmsford, Harlow and Brentwood are within easy reach. These all have mainline railway stations and Brentwood is also on the Elizabeth Line, whilst Epping is on the Central line. All are linked to Ongar by regular bus services. Stansted Airport and the M11 and M25 are easily accessible.

The Church Rooms are adjacent to St Martin's in nearby Castle Street and 'owned' by the PCC. They comprise a hall with a capacity for eighty people, a committee room, kitchen and toilets all maintained in good decorative condition. The end wall was rebuilt in 2024 and hall redecorated with a community grant.

The Rectory, built in 1984, is situated adjacent to the High Street between St. Martin's and St Peter's and is a four-bedroomed detached house with double glazing, central heating and solar panels. There is a study, lounge, dining-room, utility room, a modern fitted kitchen and a cloakroom on the ground floor. There is a detached garage for one car with parking for several cars and a secluded garden to the rear of the house. Access is via Shakletons, a residential cul-de-sac, with easy access to a footpath leading to sports centre and recreation ground and the adjacent village of High Ongar.





## Walk of Witness with Ongar Churches Together 2025



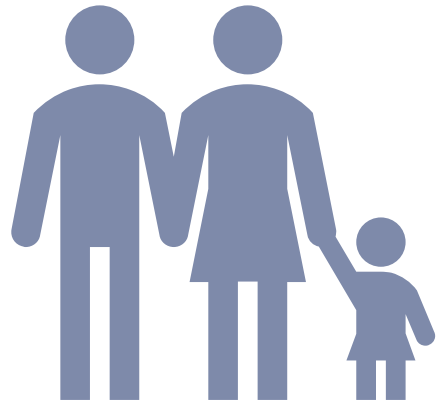
We have social events like this Epiphany meal

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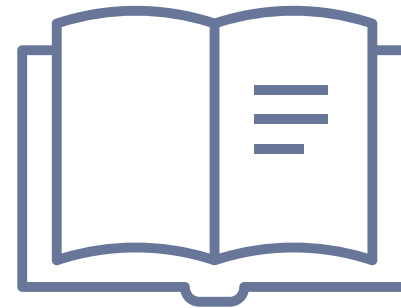
# THE PRIEST IN CHARGE WE WOULD LIKE WILL NEED TO BE



Spiritual



A people person



A confident preacher



Able to motivate people

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# WHO WE ARE AT ST MARTIN'S

## Social

Our welcome is inclusive and friendly. We host social and fundraising events to promote and support our churches and other charities.

## Prayerful

We have a twice monthly fellowship and prayer group and offer Advent and Easter study materials each year. We pray prayers left by visitors on our prayer tree at our Wednesday Communion.

## Spiritual

We have robed Holy Communion every Sunday alternating at 8 am and 10.30 am with family services every other Sunday 10.30 am. We have Church@Home on Zoom every Sunday led by our PTO LLM.

## Pastoral

We visit and give communion and comfort to the sick and housebound and provide poverty relief to those in need. We hold a monthly service at an assisted living centre.

## In need of help

We want to grow our congregation. We also have a church hall that is currently underused and could generate income for mission projects and building improvements.

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# WHO WE ARE AT ST PETER'S

## Social

Our welcome is inclusive and friendly. We host social and fundraising events to promote and support our churches.

## Prayerful

We have a midweek Julian Meeting once a month where we meditate in God's presence. It is open to all, whether they have any faith or none.

## Spiritual

We are a Chapel of Ease with services to promote Saints' Days and festivals, always with great refreshments and a great welcome.

## Pastoral

We have a Bronze EcoChurch Award and look after our churchyard in a sustainable natural way. We are also a Traidcraft Church.

## In need of help

We want to grow our congregation with regular services. We hope to generate income for mission projects and building improvements.

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# PARISH ATTENDANCE & FINANCES

## St Martin's

- We met our Parish share for 2024
- 10.30 am Communion service: 20-25 attend
- 8 am Communion service: 8 people attend
- 10 am Wednesday Communion: 9 usually attend
- Current accounts (see slide 14)

## St Peter's

- We met our parish share for 2024
- Special services including Candlemass, Patronal Festival, Harvest, Carol Service 18 to 40 people attend
- Thursday Julian Meeting: 5-8 attend
- Current accounts (see slide 14)



**Chipping Ongar with Shelley PCC**  
**Statement of Financial Activities**  
**For the period from 01 January 2025 to 30 September 2025**

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Prior year total funds
<b>Receipts</b>					
Planned giving	20,011	-	-	20,011	21,922
Collections and other giving	2,257	312	-	2,570	1,866
Other voluntary receipts	673	-	-	673	31,498
Gift Aid recovered	4,004	-	-	4,004	7,266
Other receipts	100	2,569	-	2,669	19,890
Activities for generating funds	1,551	160	-	1,711	4,178
Investment Income	288	-	-	288	822
Receipts from church activities	279	212	-	491	1,243
<b>Total income</b>	<b>29,162</b>	<b>3,253</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>32,415</b>	<b>88,686</b>
<b>Payments</b>					
Cost of generating funds	241	-	-	241	381
Missionary and Charitable Giving	40	256	-	295	596
Parish Share	25,717	-	-	25,717	25,450
Clergy and Staffing costs	211	-	-	211	173
Church Running Expenses	8,462	100	-	8,562	11,259
Hall Running Costs	3,680	673	-	4,333	3,637
Church Repairs & Maintenance	2,026	12,288	-	14,313	-
Hall Repairs & Maintenance	-	27,753	-	27,753	62,361
New Building work	-	-	-	-	-
Governance Costs	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>40,358</b>	<b>41,069</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>81,427</b>	<b>103,856</b>
<b>Net income / (expenditure) resources before transfer</b>	<b>(11,196)</b>	<b>(37,816)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(49,011)</b>	<b>(15,170)</b>
<b>Transfers:</b>					
Gross transfers between funds - in	-	-	-	-	5,434
Gross transfers between funds - out	-	-	-	-	(5,434)
<b>Other recognised gains / losses</b>					
Gains/losses on investment assets	-	-	-	-	20
Gains on revaluation, fixed assets, charity's own use	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Net movement in funds</b>	<b>(11,196)</b>	<b>(37,816)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(49,011)</b>	<b>(15,150)</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>					
<b>Total funds brought forward</b>	<b>15,727</b>	<b>43,869</b>	<b>42,432</b>	<b>102,028</b>	<b>50,001</b>
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	<b>4,531</b>	<b>6,053</b>	<b>42,432</b>	<b>53,017</b>	<b>34,851</b>
<b>Represented by</b>					
<b>Unrestricted</b>					
General fund	4,531	-	-	4,531	15,727
<b>Designated</b>					
Churches Fabric Fund	-	-	-	-	-
Mission and Ministry	-	-	-	-	-
Mission to Children	-	-	-	-	-
Social Committee	-	-	-	-	-
St Martin's Church Rooms Trading Account	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Restricted</b>					
Agency collection	-	-	-	-	-
Church Rooms Grant	-	-	-	-	-
Churches Fabric Fund	-	(28,006)	-	(28,006)	9,898
Fees (excluding PPC)	-	213	-	213	-
Mission and Ministry	-	1,516	-	1,516	1,541
Mission to Children	-	3,473	-	3,473	3,473
Poverty Relief Fund	-	3,119	-	3,119	3,119
St Peter's Church Fund	-	5,722	-	5,722	5,822
Tanner Trust	-	20,015	-	20,015	20,015
<b>Endowment</b>					
Tanner Fund Endowment	-	-	42,432	42,432	42,432
	<b>4,531</b>	<b>6,053</b>	<b>42,432</b>	<b>53,017</b>	<b>102,028</b>

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**Chipping Ongar with Shelley PCC**  
**Balance Sheet (Separate funds)**

	General	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	At 30/09/2025 £	At 30/09/2024 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>						
<b>Investments</b>	0	0	0	42,432	42,432	2,000
	0	0	0	42,432	42,432	2,000
<b>Current assets</b>						
<b>Cash At Bank And In Hand</b>	4,531	0	33,466	0	37,998	63,144
	4,531	0	33,466	0	37,998	63,144
<b>Liabilities</b>						
<b>Creditors: Amounts Falling Due In One Year</b>	0	0	(87)	0	(87)	373
	0	0	(87)	0	(87)	373
<b>Net current assets less current liabilities</b>	<b>4,531</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>33,553</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>38,084</b>	<b>62,771</b>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>	<b>4,531</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>33,553</b>	<b>42,432</b>	<b>80,517</b>	<b>64,851</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>						
<b>Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year</b>	0	0	27,500	0	27,500	30,000
	0	0	27,500	0	27,500	30,000
<b>Total net assets less liabilities</b>	<b>4,531</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6,053</b>	<b>42,432</b>	<b>53,017</b>	<b>34,851</b>
<b>Represented by</b>						
<b>Unrestricted</b>						
Unrestricted - General Fund	4,531	0	0	0	4,531	10,839
<b>Designated</b>						
Designated - Churches Fabric Fund	0	0	0	0	0	9,034
<b>Restricted</b>						
Restricted - Fees (excluding PPC)	0	0	213	0	213	0
Restricted - Churches Fabric Fund	0	0	(28,006)	0	(28,006)	(22,296)
Restricted - St Peter's Church Fund	0	0	5,722	0	5,722	7,320
Restricted - Mission and Ministry	0	0	1,516	0	1,516	2,905
Restricted - Poverty Relief Fund	0	0	3,119	0	3,119	2,544
Restricted - Tanner Trust	0	0	20,015	0	20,015	21,120
Restricted - Organ Restoration Account	0	0	3,473	0	3,473	3,366
<b>Endowment</b>						
Endowment - Tanner Fund Endowment	0	0	0	42,432	42,432	0
<b>Fund Totals</b>	<b>4,531</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6,053</b>	<b>42,432</b>	<b>53,017</b>	<b>34,851</b>

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# OUR VISION FOR OUR CHURCHES

## To be a growing church, God's gift to the community

We want to see our church grow in numbers and be more prominent in the local community.

We would like more people to use our buildings but realise that we may need to adapt them to do this.

We are happy to be part of the Mission and Ministry Unit and work to promote our churches as a team.

We would be happy to explore new worship styles but to also uphold some of our tradition.

We would like to add toilets and a kitchen to our church and better accessibility.

We are looking for a Priest in Charge who will uphold our worshipping tradition and help and support us in our efforts to further God's work in this parish.

## Our town



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# COULD THIS BE YOU?

## Personal qualities

- We are seeking a Priest in Charge who is secure and confident in their spiritual and personal life. Someone who enjoys meeting people, has the ability and faith to nurture, and be visible in, the parish. Someone who is comfortable in leading both Eucharistic and non-Eucharistic services. Ideally able to drive and having a good sense of humour.

## Teach and guide

- A person who is willing to teach and improve the understanding of the word of God and to advise and support Bible study and discussion groups. Someone who has, the skill and passion to help and guide us in furthering our mission in the community.
- We need someone who will help us strengthen and maintain the good relationships we have with local schools, homes for the elderly, town council and other organisations in the town. The Rector will be chair of the Joseph King Trust educational charity that supports young people for educational purposes.

## Engage and Grow

- We do not expect our Vicar to do everything; there is lay participation at the services and in pastoral care.
- We seek someone who will encourage and help us to engage in new things that will help us to grow as a church family as well as increase the regular church attendance.
- The parish is "in the central Anglican tradition, having had a more Catholic history, but with members today who would identify across the spectrum of Anglican-spirituality from Evangelical to Higher Church" and is keen to maintain that breadth.



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# SUMMARY

There are a lot of new housing developments planned by our local council and we see this as an opportunity to grow our churches by sharing our love of Christ.

We are looking for someone with the passion and energy who will guide us to achieve this.

Ongar is a wonderful place to be.



# THANK YOU

Chipping Ongar with Shelley PCC

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# THE PARISHES OF GREENSTED AND STANFORD RIVERS



These two parishes are part of the United Benefice of Chipping Ongar - St Martin, Shelley – St Peter, Greensted-juxta-Ongar - St Andrew and Stanford Rivers – St Margaret. They are led on an autonomous basis by an Associate Priest who has ‘Special Responsibility’ for these two parishes and lives in The Rectory in Toot Hill (the main village in the Stanford Rivers parish). This means that, in practical terms, the Priest at Chipping Ongar has no day-to-day responsibilities for these parishes apart from providing occasional cover.

Greensted Church is about 1½ miles from the centre of Ongar, set back from the road with parking for the many visitors. The well-marked walkway from the centre of Ongar is part of the Essex Way. It is relatively small, seating a maximum of sixty people. The churchyard is closed to burials but is still available for interment of ashes. It has been understandably popular for weddings and baptisms.

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**The Building:** And what a building! Described in guidebooks and websites for the area as “amazing” and “unmissable”, this is a nationally known church dating back to Saxon times, famous for its antiquity as the oldest wooden church in the world, and the oldest stave-built structure in Europe. It is moreover a beautiful building in picturesque surroundings; not surprisingly it attracts large numbers of visitors from many different countries, providing many with a contact with the numinous and a sense of a Christian tradition stretching back unbroken for centuries. It has been designated by English Heritage as one of the top ten religious sites in the country, it figures in Simon Jenkins’s book on the best English churches; its services have featured in Ruth Gledhill’s column in *The Times* and on ITV.



**The Services:** There is a service every Sunday, except fifth Sundays when we join the St Martin’s Chipping Ongar congregation. The second and fourth Sunday services of the month are Holy Communion (BCP) at 9.00 am, the first Sunday is Matins and the third Sunday is a Celtic Morning Prayer service. These are both at 9.30 am. This pattern is arranged so that the Parish Priest can provide holiday cover for their colleague in Chipping Ongar and vice-versa. There are organists who play for the services except the Celtic service where recordings are used. Lessons are read from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible; the hymn books used are recently purchased *Ancient & Modern Hymns and Songs*.

**The People:** The parish had a population of 629 on the 2021 Census which incorporates an estate on the edge of Ongar. The Electoral Roll is 27. Depending on the service, attendance can be anything between 15 and 25. Many people drive from outside the parish to attend this lovely church, attracted by the history of the building. The congregation is mostly elderly but there are a few younger families who join us occasionally. There a group of guides for organised parties visiting the church, and others provide a visible presence in the church especially on Sundays, manning the sales stalls which contribute a great deal to the parish’s financial stability. Our social activities are limited by the lack of a parish hall.

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STANFORD RIVERS CHURCH: St Margaret's is beside Stanford Rivers Hall and the largest farm in the parish, equidistant from the villages of Toot Hill and Little End. It is beside the Three Forests Way, with walkers and cyclists passing through during the summer.

THE BUILDING: The church dates from about 1150. It has two vestries and a gallery, and the former boiler house was converted into a toilet about ten years ago. A recent reordering of the church has created a gathering space at the west end. There is a good quality two manual electronic organ; the church has excellent acoustics. The churchyard remains open with graves dating back to the 18th century.

THE SERVICES: There are currently only two services per month: morning worship on first Sundays and Holy Communion on third Sundays. They are fairly informal (by Anglican standards) in nature and reflect the congregation the church currently attracts.

THE PEOPLE: The parish has a population of 832 (2021 census) and the Electoral Roll is 12. The congregation is mixed with a few who have been attending the church for many years and others (generally younger) who have been drawn in more recently. Attendance is variable and can be anything between five and twenty. This congregation would mostly consider themselves as in either the central or the evangelical tradition. An enquirers course last year has now become a small Bible study group which meets fortnightly.

