



**The Parish of
Langdon Hills**



ST JOHN'S



Parish Profile 2026

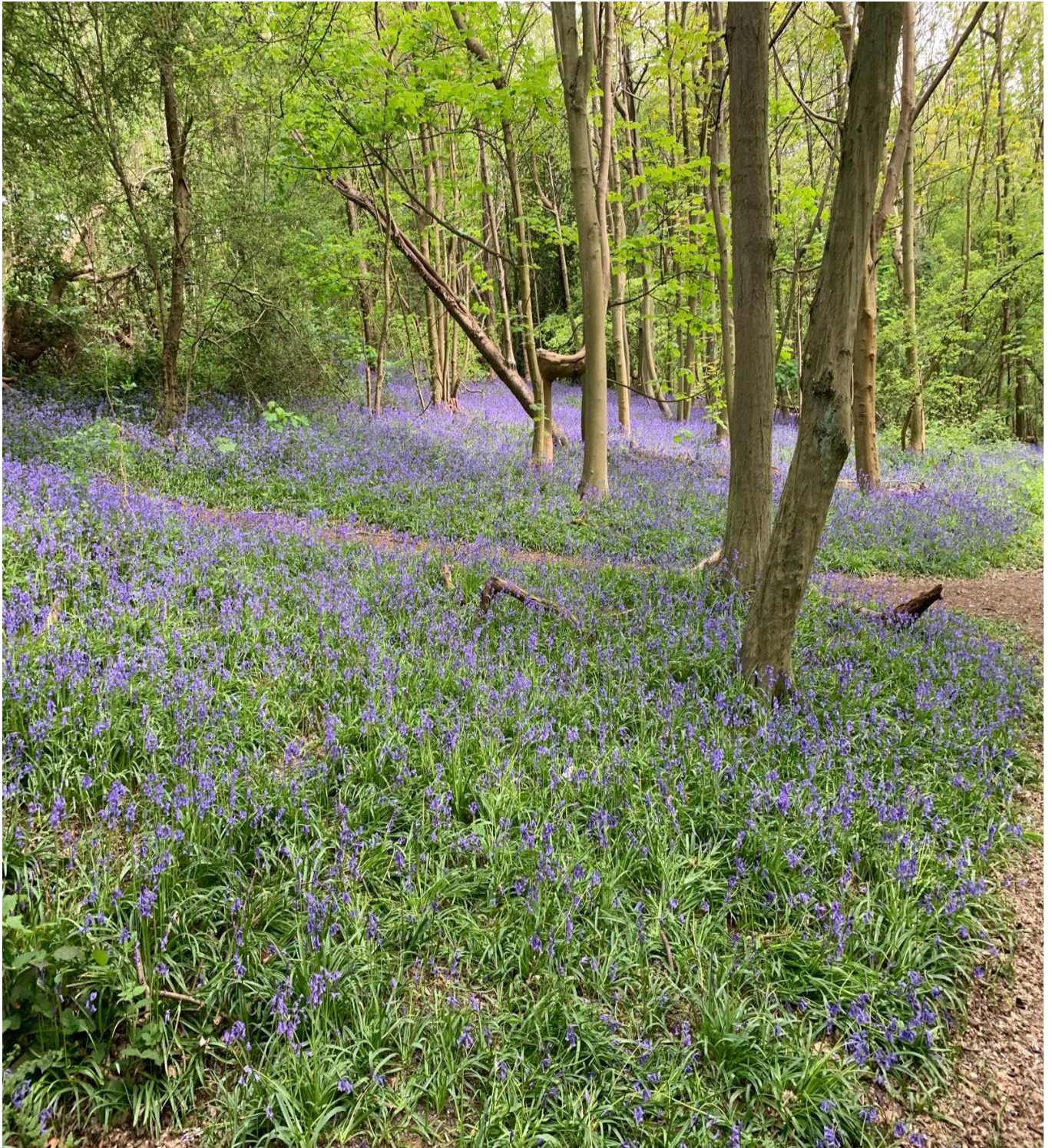


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THE DIOCESE: A MESSAGE FROM BISHOP GULI



Covering Essex and East London, Chelmsford is one of the largest, most diverse 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 local, national and global challenges that have a direct impact on our parish churches, schools, chaplaincies and the communities we serve.

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 set out a 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 and schools. 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 vibrant of dioceses.

+Guli

Bishop of Chelmsford

Find out more about our Diocesan Direction of Travel and Values:



www.chelmsford.anglican.org/travelling-well-together

Well Together in Times of Change

The Archdeaconry of Southend in the Bradwell Episcopal Area



Dear friend,

The Bradwell Area is a beautifully diverse, rich in culture and among our varied communities. The nine deaneries of the Episcopal Area cover south and mid Essex, from Epping Forest and Ongar, Brentwood and Thurrock on the M25 out to the coast with the River Thames as the southern border and the Blackwater in the north. Our two cities are Southend and Chelmsford. Significant new housing is being built across our area. We serve the 20th century suburban populations of Basildon and Hadleigh as well as a spread of rural situations including Rochford and Maldon & Dengie where St Cedd's 7th century Bradwell Chapel still stands as the bridgehead of 'mission to the East Saxons'.

My team and I, with each deanery, are trying to help one another bring about positive changes and establish ways of mutual support in each local context. Some of this counts as 'innovation', some is in sharing learning and ideas, some are expressing our being in ways we've been called to for generations. There is a changing culture in the Bradwell area with a focus on equipping each church with tools for renewal and the means to foster a sense of abundance. We welcome innovators and leaders of change who are led by the spirit. We welcome those who show and tell the good news of Jesus afresh among each generations and context. Most of all we welcome priests to apply for posts who are people of prayer, who call upon our loving Heavenly Father for the ways and means to display his love and win people into his Kingdom.

I would warmly welcome you to listen out for the prompting of God in respect of this post. Ask him in prayer to bless the people in the place you read about here. Ask for love to abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight so that you may be able to discern what is best. I hope that what you will contribute towards, along with the saints of God in this place, is the development of a loving, caring and nurturing environment in which everyone can do their very best and have a good time doing it! That is, under God I humbly submit, what we are here for in support of you were you to join the team. Do be in touch with me or the Archdeacon if you want to know more detail on any of this. With my blessings

With my blessings,

The Right Reverend Adam Atkinson,

Bishop of Bradwell

A Word from the Venerable Dr Sue Lucas, the Archdeacon of Southend



The Venerable Dr Sue Lucas

I am delighted you are discerning your call to this role in the archdeaconry of Southend. This archdeaconry has something for everyone – from the coastal city of Southend-on-Sea itself, to the mainly rural area around Rochford, to the industrial docks around Thurrock, right on the edge of London. It is an exciting place to be, and I am determined to both support and appropriately challenge the clergy here to be the best they can be for God’s people in this place. My prayer is that our parishes and people will see themselves as missional and ministering communities, led by confident and well-resourced clergy.

We are living through times of change, in the world and in the church. Here in the archdeaconry of Southend, within the Diocesan values of Travelling Well Together, ([travelling-well-together-25-final-compressed.pdf](#)) we seek to embrace change as coming from God: ‘to live is to change and to be perfect is to have changed often,’ wrote John Henry Newman. There are challenges and tensions of course within any period of significant change, but I believe that if we remain open to God and committed to one another, God is doing something new and exciting here.

My hope is that you feel called here are because you are someone who also recognises the need for change, and who is curious and excited to lead God’s people through it here. I hope you are up for working collaboratively with clergy and lay leaders, and, yes, with your archdeacon and area dean, to help discern a sustainable and flexible shape for the life of the church in this place.

Langdon Hills at a Glance

We would love to introduce you to Langdon Hills: a prayerful, welcoming and friendly Spirit-filled Church of England parish with two churches, one parish family, and a deep desire to see people come to faith and grow as disciples of Jesus.

Our hope is that this “At a Glance” summary helps you quickly understand who we are, what is currently thriving, where the key opportunities lie and the kind of leader we are prayerfully seeking.

Two Churches, One Parish Family

- St Mary’s (1876): Traditional Anglican worship, typically 20–40 attending
- St John’s (1991): Contemporary charismatic worship, typically 50–100 attending
- Electoral Roll: 86
- Parish Population: 9,064

Key Strengths

- A strong and consistent culture of prayer (daily 9am prayer, prayer ministry and pastoral support, WhatsApp prayer groups)
- A growing men’s ministry (*Men United*)
- An active women’s fellowship (*Beautiful Believers*)
- Developing youth engagement (*Youth St John’s* and *Youth Alpha*)
- Vibrant and welcoming bible study groups

A Significant Ministry Asset

St John’s Childcare is a professionally run preschool - It is a trusted and well-regarded part of the local community and provides a daily connection point with families.

We believe this ministry is currently under-developed as an intentional outreach and discipleship pathway and it represents one of the most significant mission opportunities in the parish.

Financial Position

- Parish Share is fully covered by regular giving
- Childcare surplus supports building costs
- 2026 is projected to deliver a reasonable surplus
- Recent cost reduction initiatives have been successful

Location & Facilities

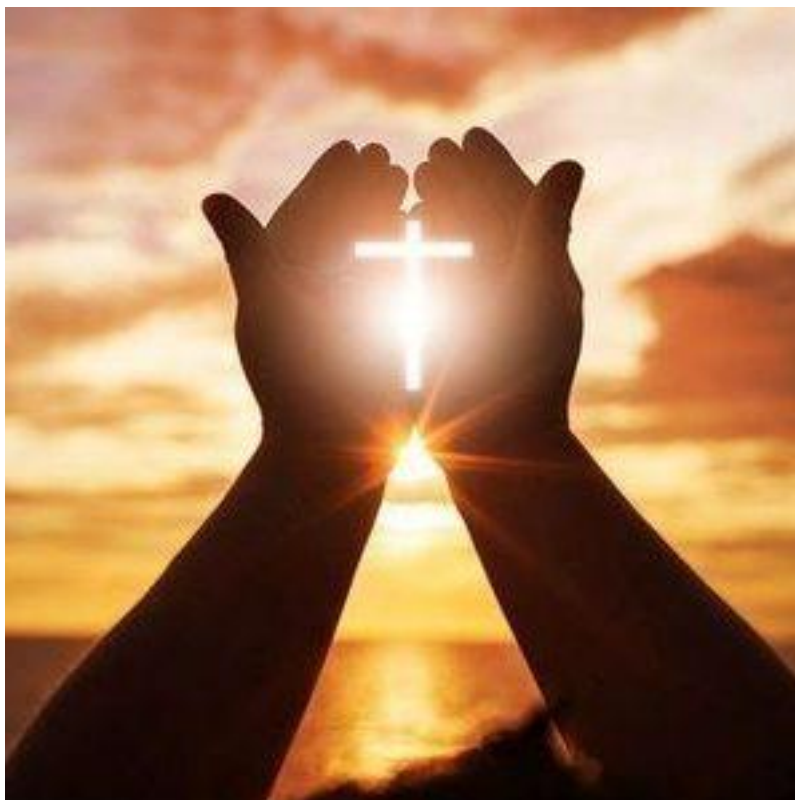
- St Mary’s church is located at the highest point in Essex, beside the 461-acre Langdon Hills Nature Reserve

- Strong transport links to London and Southend
- A detached four-bedroom rectory with a study
- A peaceful setting with a strong sense of community

The Opportunity

We are a prayer-grounded parish seeking collaborative leadership to:

- Deepen discipleship across two distinct worship styles
- Unlock the missional potential of St John's Childcare
- Equip and release emerging leaders
- Strengthen parish unity while honouring our diversity



St John's Childcare: A Unique Mission Opportunity

St John's Childcare is one of the most significant and distinctive ministries in our parish and one of our greatest mission opportunities. As a professionally run preschool for children aged 1–4, it places us in daily contact with local families at a key stage of life, offering countless opportunities to build trust, serve well, and create pathways into the wider church community.

What's Already in Place

St John's Childcare is a thriving setting with strong foundations:

- A team of around 40 qualified staff
- An experienced management team and clear leadership structure
- A stable and well-run operation, with surplus income contributing towards parish costs
- A strong local reputation, with excellent facilities including the 2011 purpose-built extension

The Missional Opportunity

We believe St John's Childcare is currently under-developed as an intentional outreach and a natural next step into church life. With prayer, vision, and gentle intentionality, we see huge potential for this ministry to become a key part of how families come to know Jesus, find community, and begin to explore faith.

We are looking for a leader who will help us to:

- Strengthen the relational bridge between childcare families and the life of the church
- Shape a clear, realistic vision for early years ministry and community engagement
- Create simple, welcoming “next steps” that help families move from contact to connection, and from connection to belonging
- Encourage and support staff to see their work as part of the church's wider mission, while remaining genuinely welcoming to families of all faiths and none

This is a rare opportunity to build on an established, trusted and stable foundation and to shape long-term impact in Langdon Hills through early years ministry, hospitality, and discipleship.





What We're Not Looking For

We are not seeking a rector to manage the day-to-day running of the childcare setting. Operational leadership is already in place through the management team and the Childcare Committee.

Instead, we are prayerfully seeking a rector who will bring strategic oversight, missional leadership, and partnership, helping us unlock the full potential of St John's Childcare as part of our parish vision and calling.

LOCATION

The parish of Langdon Hills is a part of Basildon in Essex and is remarkable for its quiet and peaceful environment inside a busy New Town development.

Basildon itself has a wealth of variety in terms of essentials like rail and road connections, schools, college and a hospital. It offers a theatre and several cinema complexes with a leisure park known locally as “Bas Vegas” with hotels, gyms restaurants and entertainments like bowling, indoor and outdoor golf and many more. A new swimming pool was built to host some of the 2012 Olympic events and is now the community led Basildon Sporting Village with open access to all for swimming and a gym.

There is some local industry, and Basildon is close to major employment opportunities in London. Rail links provide access to London Underground and DLR, with the City of London only minutes away. Road access to the M25 is only 5 minutes from our parish.



The spectacular Bluebell woods cover much of the natural woodland in Langdon Hills
Viewing highly recommended!

Map of the Langdon Nature Discovery Park

Welcome to **Langdon Nature Discovery Park**

Welcome to our largest land-based nature reserve and a site of national importance for wildlife. Langdon Nature Discovery Park offers miles of walks and spectacular views from some of the highest ground in Essex.

This expansive landscape naturally divides into five distinctive areas. You are currently in **Dunton**, the home of **The Haven**, the last remaining Plotland house. Discover more by exploring the **Plotlands Trail**.

The **Lake Trail** is a short walk to Langdon's gorgeous lake and meadows. Then for family fun follow the much-loved **Peter Rabbit™ Trail**.

Exploring further, walk to **Lincewood**, then on to the stunning woodlands of **Mark's Hill** and finally the wildflower meadows of **Willow Park**.

For recommendations, rest, refreshment, and retail therapy visit us at the Nature Discovery Centre.

Help us keep Langdon special by becoming a member of Essex Wildlife Trust today.



Love Essex • Love Wildlife



The parish is adjacent to the active town centre but is relatively rural, with a large Nature reserve where interesting wildlife such as swans and Muntjac deer can be found. The reserve has a Visitor Centre with a popular café for walkers, and it provides educational facilities such as nature walks and lectures for pupils from the two primary schools in the parish. Our two churches are both adjacent to the nature reserve, and it is

possible to walk from one to the other without crossing a road or even seeing a house. On the way you can find spectacular views of the estuary out to Canary Wharf and the City.



Westley Heights
Country Park



View from the woods
behind St Mary's looking
West towards the City

As well as the natural amenities, the parish includes recreational parks and play areas, cafes and shops including a large Tesco. Laindon railway station is a short walk from the Rectory, and a large section of the community commutes to London or Southend areas.

Basildon University hospital is within a mile from St Mary's church and is one of the largest local employers. That is reflected in our congregations with a higher than average proportion of professional and skilled workers.

The parish includes two sought-after Primary schools with strong historic links to the two churches respectively.

The Rectory

Located in a quiet residential area of Langdon Hills, the Rectory is a four-bedroom detached family home with spacious living accommodation. It is located 15-20 mins walk from either church, or a short drive



The house has a good size study, lounge, dining room, kitchen, utility, downstairs cloakroom, and a large driveway leading to a double garage and side access to a pleasant garden



The Rectory is a short walk from Laindon C2C station offering a 30-minute journey to Fenchurch Street, or a 10 minute link to London Underground at Upminster.

In the opposite direction, the train goes to the popular seaside resorts of Westcliffe, Leigh-on-Sea, Southend and Shoeburyness.

There are local shops, doctors' surgery, dentists and a post office within walking distance

The church – Our Mission Statement

Mission statement

Bringing the Good News of the Gospel out into the community is the main purpose of our church, by loving the Lord our God with all our heart, all our soul and with all our mind, and loving one another as ourselves

As Jesus taught us:

..go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit..

Matthew 28:19

We aspire to be led by God's Holy Spirit in everything we do – seeking to bring as many people as possible to faith in Christ Jesus.

Our Vision

Our vision is to grow together in love and faith, deepening our walk with Christ and our understanding of God's word through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We long to be a prayerful and welcoming community, devoted to God, united in spirit, and active in sharing his love – both within our church family and throughout the wider community

Vision in Action

- Following Christ – To deepen our relationship with God through small groups centred on scripture, prayer and shared reflection – nurturing spiritual growth, friendship and mutual encouragement in faith
- Worship – To cultivate creative and participatory worship through music, testimony, intercessory prayer, and youth involvement – enriching our shared life and openness to the Holy Spirit's leading
- Leadership and Ministry Training – To identify, mentor, and equip emerging lay leaders across ministries such as preaching, pastoral care, worship and outreach – encourage everyone to develop their gifts in serving God's mission
- Prayer – to foster a culture of prayer, both collectively and individually – strengthening our spiritual unity and sensitivity to the Holy Spirit's voice

In all these ways, we seek to live out Christ's Great Commission - sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ with love, faith, hope and humility, as we walk together on the path God has set before us

Our Churches

Langdon Hills parish churches.



The beautiful building of St Mary's. 150 years old this year!



There are two Anglican Church buildings - **St Mary's** is celebrating its 150th birthday in 2026, St John's church was built in the 1990s as a pioneer building in the newly created village of Great Berry opposite a new primary school and not much else. Great Berry now has a full complement of houses and further development is planned on land beyond the Nature reserve.

The parish has a Catholic Church as well as Baptist, Methodist and Pentecostal free churches, fostering a shared Christian presence across the area. Churches Together in Basildon (CTB) invites all churches to take part in open air celebrations at nearby Wat Tyler Park from time to time.

St Mary's and All Saints is a traditional Gothic design with a bell tower and a picturesque setting on top of the hill (the highest church in Essex above sea level) It is a listed Grade II building with beautiful stained-glass windows. The congregation values its reverential atmosphere, and the services generally include a robed choir procession, and traditional worship hymns. There is a working pipe organ for when we can get a musician, and we are currently using pre-recorded music to accompany our worship.

St John's was planned as a worship centre intended as a collaboration across the other Christian churches, but that did not happen and the Diocese continued alone. The services there are more family orientated with a lively and modern slant compared to St Mary's. There is an AV desk managing the projection of the liturgy and worship songs plus any illustrations required to enhance the service. There is a regular Sunday School activity, and a separate chapel area for private prayer and a listening service.



What goes on:

Each church has two churchwardens and there is a single PCC to oversee the activities, including the Childcare Setting.

The Childcare started as an original idea to provide young families with daycare of their infants by volunteers under the Rector's guidance. It quickly grew into a recognised and registered professional organisation and in early 2010s we built a large extension to accommodate extra classrooms. Although the PCC is responsible for the activities, day to day management is shared by employees, and sub committee of the PCC including the church Treasurer, two PCC members and the childcare Management. A Finance Officer employed by the PCC controls the business side, reporting to the main PCC via the treasurer. The business has grown beyond the point where the Rector was in charge. There are now 40 employees, and over 100 places, with a waiting list.

The childcare business has been a challenge to keep up with, but systems are now in place to enable it to run smoothly. Turnover is in the high six figures, and the net profit is a supplement to our traditional income, such that we are expecting a surplus over expenditure this year.

The childcare is important in our community, and there is a lot of contact with parents and carers and the church at St John's. We run a 0-3's outreach twice a week and many families have made a longstanding connection with the church as a result of the childcare operation. It remains a successful branch of the overall outreach project.

The congregation has included several LLMs and PTO ministers, and lay ministry is strongly encouraged. There have been eight members of our congregation going forward to ordination over the last few years, and currently there are several exploring their vocation as preachers. Three retired lay ministers are among the congregation now, and a retired priest with PTO has supported us during the vacancy.

Lay members are encouraged to undergo training to administer the chalice during communion, to read the weekly lessons and to offer intercessions within the services, plus there is a prayer ministry offered after the service wherever possible.

The church also has a paid Parish Administrator, finance administrator and maintenance man, who take the brunt of the admin from the Minister to enable them to concentrate on the most important things in the Parish. These roles are made possible due to the surplus in income from the Childcare.

Outreach

Other areas of community outreach include a men's and a women's social group, support for the schools visiting team, support for the local care home adjacent to St John's, a youth group, and more.

There are up to 6 Bible study groups, whose leaders meet regularly. In the absence of a Rector, this group has organised Alpha plans, a Lent course, and other overall church activities. There is a quarterly Outreach meeting with usually 15 or so people to discuss and plan ahead possible activities. An eco-church project reports to this meeting and the church has recently achieved Bronze Award status.

Church members also actively support recently released prisoners, local homeless provisions, hospital visits, and many other activities.

This document is intended to showpiece our parish to a prospective incumbent. There are very many activities where the church provides a service to various sections of the community, and activities where church members go into the community in the name of Jesus to help make Langdon Hills a better place. There is insufficient space to list them all here.



Combining our monthly community walk with the sponsored “Fun Walk” to raise funds for our churches and pre-school

Prepping for the post Alpha BBQ celebrations with our resident chef!



*Caroling at the Langdon Nature Discovery Centre after our monthly walk.
An opportunity to hand out leaflets about our church and Christmas services.*

Life Events – Occasional Services

Weddings

Couples wanting to get married are asked to meet with the Rector and attend a marriage preparation course. Weddings are primarily held at St Mary's where we can offer additional services, if required, of an organist and a choir, or we can use the hymnal+ system. Amazing flower arrangements and pew ends are completed by the talented flower ladies at St Mary's



Baptisms and Confirmations

We have been blessed in the last couple of years to have had many Baptisms. Families who want their children baptised go through a preparation course and the ceremonies are part of the morning services. We have also had many full immersion baptisms at St John's where we have a pool, and in 2024 we held a Baptism service in the sea at Shoeburyness, where several members of our church were Baptised.

We have also had many members confirmed in the last few years.



Funerals / Ashes Interments

We have a churchyard located in the grounds of the original St Mary's church, in the most beautiful, peaceful and serene surroundings.

The graveyard is in the process of being formally closed as there is no room for new burial plots, but there is an ashes plot which is being kept open by us and there are lots of plots available for the future!



Funeral services can take place at either church, although they tend to be held at St Mary's, and we also hold an annual memorial service there (usually in November), where candles are lit, and names of loved ones are read out as part of the service.



Our aspirations for a new leader

We aspire to be a Jesus-led church, and we look for leadership in Spiritual growth individually and communally. We hope for a leader who will walk with us on our journey and inspire us to get closer to God.

On our part we will offer an applicant as much support as we can. We are open to new ideas and approaches, and we expect to be re-directed in certain areas as well as finding new paths together.

We believe that God is moving to provide us with the right person in this season of our lives together. We trust that God will bring someone who shares our mission to grow in love, faith and service – in Langdon Hills and the wider world, where our children and friends who move on can carry the Good News of Jesus to others.

Our hopes and plans for the future.

We naturally hope for growth in our church and in our personal faith. We have taken Gods message to look after the children, and our Childcare in the church enables us to offer a working example of love and care for the many young children and their families who come through our doors.

Previously, we have been able to afford a full-time children's worker, and we hope to develop our mission in this direction again. God has rewarded our long-term plans and there are exciting possibilities ahead.

A Message from the Basildon Deanery

The Deanery covers the towns of Basildon, Billericay and Wickford and the rural areas surrounding them. Most of the population is in the three urban areas, Billericay (including Great Burstead and Ramsden Crays), Wickford north of the A127 and Basildon to the south. There are areas of high deprivation in Basildon and pockets of significant need elsewhere, notably in Great Burstead.

The total population is circa 175,000 and rising: significant regeneration is already under way in Basildon and new housing developments are being built or planned north of the A127. There has been a lot of discussion and public consultation on the proposed plan which is for about 13,000 new homes across the district, 3,000 of which are planned for Billericay, and includes provision for traveller sites. We are developing plans for new missional initiatives and site redevelopments in response to these plans.

The council's Corporate Plan 2022-2026 sets out three key strategic themes which cover the full range of their responsibilities and priorities and to which we want to make our contribution:

- **People:** We want Basildon to be home to healthy and active local communities able to support themselves and each other.
- **Place:** We want Basildon to offer a high quality of life for all residents through attractive, liveable, accessible and safe neighbourhoods and towns along with the provision of enduring facilities, green spaces and town centres that meet the needs of the community.
- **Prosperity:** We want Basildon to have a thriving, dynamic and diverse economy where all our communities benefit from increased opportunity and our workforce has the right skills for our local economy and beyond.

We have developed a Deanery website to profile in a new way key aspects of each of our parishes and link these to other areas and places of interest in the borough.

Ecumenical links are strong in each of the urban centres and there is a tradition of collegiality within the deanery chapter. The Deanery Plan commits us to continuing to value difference of tradition, to discern how sometimes scarce resources can best be used, to work together in responding to new housing developments, and to encourage vocations to ordained ministry, and to both licensed and less formal lay ministry, including the ministry of administration. The deanery vision includes a commitment to working more closely together and also commits us to equipping and growing ordained and lay ministry and engaging in mission - especially among children and young people.

These strands remain strong in the life of each of our parishes.

Following reorganisation of several parishes, we have begun working together on the development of a new Deanery Plan. Joining our Deanery at this time will include the opportunity to contribute to and shape that plan.

Revd Jonathan Evens, Area Dean of Basildon
Christine Coe, Lay Chair