

The Parishes of
Bradwell-on-Sea
Dengie & Asheldham
St Lawrence Newland
and Tillingham

Parish Profile





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This document has been jointly produced by all four parishes of this new benefice.

The appendices are downloadable as separate documents.

Appendix 1 The Parish of St Thomas, Bradwell-on-Sea Parish Profile Local Information

Appendix 2 The Parish of St Lawrence, St Lawrence Newland Parish Profile Local Information

Appendix 3 The Parish of St Nicholas, Tillingham Parish Profile Local Information

Appendix 4 The Parish of St James Dengie with Asheldham Parish Profile Local Information



Summary

Bradwell, Dengie and Asheldham, St Lawrence and Tillingham

Both Joint Benefices of Bradwell and St Lawrence and Tillingham and Dengie have opted to join as one benefice with a full time priest rather than two benefices each with a part time House for duty priest.

Having started an exciting journey in a new joint benefice we would like the new Priest (Priest-in-charge) to help us to continue to take our churches forward in the encouragement of baptisms, confirmations and welcoming new members.

Within the benefice we have the ancient chapel of St Peter ad Murum. The Chapel has its own ordained Chaplain who is a member of the ministry team.

Qualities:

We produced a survey of 10 questions in all five of our parishes to ask 'what qualities' parishioners would like their new priest to have and the top three most popular were:

- **Schools (works closely with our local schools)**
- **Community (bringing church and community closer)**
- **Visiting; (those in need of support)**

From this we established the qualities we think are required:

- One who can work with our two primary schools and work with existing groups and projects that have been started in our parishes.
- One who can reach out in pastoral care and engage with people of all ages, being warm, compassionate and ready to listen to those whom he or she meets, both inside and outside the church congregation.
- We seek an energetic and dedicated priest who inspires confidence to reach out to our communities, helping to unify any divided communities and groups and help us further develop the spiritual life of our parishes.
- And to be a team builder who feels comfortable within the church and the community, discerning and developing the gifts and abilities of the laity.



Gifts, Skills and Experiences

- Lead our parishes to an exciting and fruitful new era by considering new working relationships with our neighbouring parishes in the deanery/Mission & Ministry Unit (MMU), taking into consideration the Diocesan Transforming Presence and Re-Imagining Ministry guidelines.
- Inspire and lead our church schools in worship.
- Actively welcome and encourage all, especially our young people and their families, into Faith, Love and Worship within our Churches, developing individual journeys in faith via baptism and confirmation.
- Be at ease with our middle of the road worship, allowing our varied congregation services that comfort and inspire them.
- Be a prayerful and holy leader whose life is rooted in prayer and the Eucharist.
- Be a part of the St Peter's Chapel team, working with the Chaplain, the Bradwell Christian Festival organisation, as well as the Othona Community and the Asheldham Centre.
- Be compassionate; someone who brings warmth to the whole community inside and outside our churches. Being committed to pastoral visits to parishioners in their homes or in hospital if required.
- To help us develop music and art within our churches and worship.

The Future

Key challenges for the new incumbent and congregations

Our first task is to bring two joint benefices together to a new benefice of four parishes; this will require building new relationships, facing new challenges and embracing new opportunities.

We are conscious that we have to find a way of reaching out to the 30-40 year old group, in order to provide a link to children and young people (we are consistently trying to strengthen links with our schools), while continuing to support the ageing community.

Our congregations include people from a varied denominational background and our style of worship attempts to take account of this eclecticism. We need an incumbent who can provide a ministry where all can be refreshed within the wide worshipping community of the Church of England.



Where we are at the moment

This profile was produced by all four parishes in complete agreement

Our Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths

1. A Lay participation in leading services and giving talks and a committed core membership.
2. A friendly and supportive atmosphere.
3. Two church schools, serving all our parishes.
4. An exciting new annexe at St Lawrence church enabling the church to expand its activities to the communities.
5. The use of St Peter ad Murum Chapel in Bradwell-on-Sea and the development of a Visitors Resource Centre in the village.
6. Enthusiastic groups of Friends, a children's group 'Pebbles', bell ringers, flower arrangers, Thursday group, Cafés, Prayer Meeting, Bible Study groups, CCS and Lent Groups.
7. Sunday attendances have shown a slight increase over the last few years in Bradwell and St Lawrence but during the long vacancy these numbers have dropped. At Tillingham and Dengie the numbers are consistent.

Weaknesses

1. We need to offer more support to our Church Schools, including providing governors from some of our parishes.
2. Our parishes no longer have choirs, and are lacking choral support.
3. More emphasis could be given to care and prayer for the communities.
4. The age profile of the congregation and leadership does not match the age profile of the local population, i.e. presently still under-represented in the under 40 group, including young families and children.
5. We need to improve communication within our churches and our communities.
6. Lower numbers attending Sunday services compared with a generation ago proportionally to the numbers in the parishes.



Opportunities

We identified 8 areas of mission which the new incumbent and PCCs could work with.

1. Continue the good work encouraging baptism and confirmation to address the lack of children, teenagers and adults under 40.
2. Within the deanery/MMU, find ways of working closely together with the other parishes to engage in the process to implement the Diocesan strategy through Transforming Presence and Reimagining Ministry and especially to strengthen the links between other parishes in the area.
3. Share resources and church buildings with other churches in the deanery and diocese and co-operate in outreach activities building better connections with the people already using the church buildings.
4. Build on and re-establish our relationship with, and the use of, St Peter's Chapel, supporting visitors and groups within the facilities at St Thomas'.
5. Develop our communication and social media skills.
6. Budget and use our finances more strategically.
7. Ensure that our parishioners are cared for, recognised and that their gifts are developed.
8. Develop music and art within our churches.

The Deanery & Diocese

In our diocese we are working towards a vision as set out in 'Transforming Presence' within which we have a policy for 'Re-imagining Ministry', whereby the parishes within the deanery are looking towards churches working together within clusters of parishes.

Rural Dean's contribution to profile – Revd Canon Sandra Manley

In common with most dioceses, the diocese of Chelmsford is undergoing considerable re-organisation and rationalisation of ministry, both ordained and lay. This arises partly because of the predicted national shortage of clergy in the next decade.

Under the Re-imagining Ministry section of the Diocesan 'Transforming Presence' strategy, the deanery of Maldon and Dengie will have two areas, provisionally termed Mission and Ministry Units (MMUs). The Eastern MMU of the deanery is expected to have three stipendiary priests, based respectively at Burnham-on-Crouch; Bradwell-on-Sea, St. Lawrence, Tillingham, and Dengie with Asheldham; and Southminster/Steeple. Other benefices in this MMU (namely Creeksea and Althorne) will have House for Duty or SSM ministry, with support when needed from the stipendiary clergy in the Unit. The Western Unit will contain the more urban parishes of Maldon/Heybridge, together with some rural villages.



A description of our Parishes

Vision Statement (jointly produced from all our parishes).

‘Building on the cornerstone of Christ’ our vision is to:-

- Be a people who are more welcoming, accepting and open to all.
- Demonstrate God’s love for all by the way we reach out, live, serve and interact with our neighbours.
- Break down any barriers in order to develop stronger links with other groups and visitors.
- Provide an environment and “space” where the mystery of God can be encountered, Jesus can be met, the Holy Spirit can empower growth, learning can happen and people can be encouraged.
- Share the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ through the ministry of the Church everywhere.

The Worshipping Community

Introduction & Structure

The parishes have been under the leadership of a House for Duty priest for Tillingham and Dengie with Asheldham and a House for Duty priest for Bradwell and St Lawrence. We also have a Reader (PTO) in Tillingham and Authorised Local Preachers across the parishes. Our churchmanship can be best described as a “middle of the road” Eucharistic community, vestments sometimes being worn by our previous Priests. Our previous incumbents preached from the 3-year lectionary but sometimes presented a series of sermons based on a topic.

The Future:

The joint Churchwardens plan to establish with their PCCs a new pattern of worship that will enable a new priest to more easily serve the four parishes. When we establish a new pattern of services it will be worked as a trial, but will need the assistance and willingness of the Chaplain, Reader and Lay Members to take services when appropriate.

We do agree that on the fifth Sunday we have a Joint Benefice Parish Communion Service in turn in;

- Bradwell-on-Sea (St Thomas Church or St Peters Chapel)
- Dengie St James Church
- St Lawrence Newland (St Lawrence Church or the Church Centre)
- Tillingham St Nicholas Church.



Sunday Worship Our present pattern of worship is:

Bradwell-on-Sea	10:30 Parish Communion	10:30 All Age Service	10:30 Parish Communion	8:00 Holy Communion
	3:30 Afternoon service (rest home)			10:30 All Age Service
St Lawrence	9:00 Parish Communion	10:00 Parish Communion at Centre	9:00 Parish Communion	10:00 All Age Service and Centre
	10:00 All Age Service and Centre	6pm Evening Service	10:00 All Age Service and Centre	6pm Evening Service
Tillingham	10am Morning Worship	10:00 Parish Communion	10am Morning Worship	10:00 Parish Communion
Dengie	8am BCP Communion	3pm Evening Service	8am BCP Communion	3pm Evening Service

Services requiring a priest

Fifth Sunday

The Parishes of Bradwell-on-Sea and St Lawrence have a Joint Benefice Parish Communion Service in either;

St Thomas Church, St Peters Chapel, St Lawrence Church or St Lawrence Church Centre, at 10-30am if at Bradwell or 10am if at St Lawrence.

The Parishes of Tillingham and Dengie with Asheldham presently do not have regular joint services.

On special Sundays an evening service may be held at St Thomas, St Nicholas, St James, St Peters Chapel or St Lawrence Church.

Morning worship is Common Worship communion or Morning Worship or an All Age service which conforms to the Services in Common Worship. At St Nicholas, St Thomas, and both St Lawrence centres of worship there are about 10-20 weekly communicants mainly within the 40-80 age range plus a varying number of children, St James have about 10 communicants. Our churches have Common Worship Communion Service booklets with the Eucharistic prayer included so different prayers can be used.

Weekday Services

Wednesdays 'St Nicholas Tillingham' 9:15am Communion or Morning Prayers

Thursday 'St Peters Chapel' 9:00am Communion (presently lead by the Chaplain of St Peters Chapel)



Once a month

3:00pm Communion in Down Hall Rest Home

School Services in the schools, St Thomas or St Nicholas Churches.

Lay Ministry

Lay involvement plays an important part in the life and work at our centres of worship. Our enthusiastic laity takes on a wide variety of responsibilities from administering and serving at the altar at communion, maintaining the churchyard and cemetery, arranging and clearing up after services and social events.

Our parishes have a Reader/LLM, authorised local preachers, and other members of the laity who regularly lead the non-Communion Services at our churches preaching at all types of Services, taking Communion to the housebound, share in the leadership of Advent and Lent study groups and lead Baptism, Confirmation and Marriage preparation classes.

At all five centres of worship lay ministers of communion help at services on a rota basis. This has been part of the regular worship for the past 25 years under various incumbents. Congregation members also participate in services by reading the lessons and leading the intercessions. The role of the sidesman is viewed as being vital as it is often the first contact a visitor has with the congregation. We endeavour to make everyone feel welcome at services and we invite the congregation to join us for refreshments after some services.

We also have an ordained Chaplain based in Bradwell who is in charge of St Peters Chapel which comes under the administration of the Cathedral, is currently part of the local ministry team.

Music

All our parishes use their church organs on a regular basis. Alternatively music is provided by pianos, music groups or electronically.

Various hymn books are used: Hymns Old & New, the Complete Anglican Edition, Songs of Fellowship, Mission Praise and Ancient and Modern.

At St Lawrence the services are often supported by the St Lawrence Singers.

At St Thomas they have a small ad hoc choir which can be called upon for weddings and special services.

Midweek Worship

The Priest has held occasional midweek school services in the church or the schools, and parish services in any of the churches on Holy Days. Holy Communion has also been taken to the local Care Homes monthly. The Bradwell Thursday 9am morning communion service at the Chapel is presently lead by the Chaplain of St Peter's Chapel.



Seasonal Festivals & Services.

Most major festivals are celebrated with varying numbers attending.

Our churches start the church year with the lighting of candles over the four Sundays of Advent.

We begin Christmas with Church Carol services, on Christmas Eve some have a crib service and midnight communion. On Christmas Day a family or communion services are sometimes held. Tillingham and Bradwell host a carol service for the schools. Other organisations like the Women's Institute or the Flower Club also have carol services. A Christmas card listing church services is sent to all houses from each parish.

The special services of Lent, Holy Week and Easter like Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday services are usually held. Other forms of worship like a Watch with Christ and a procession with the Cross to St Peter's Chapel with prayers and meditation are held on Good Friday.

On Rogation Sunday Bradwell and St Lawrence join on a Rogation Rally around the two parishes.

Ascension Day has not always been celebrated in recent years, but some of the parishes would like to reinstate this service in the future.

The Pentecost Communion is a celebration service that in one parish is held outside in the churchyard in the sunshine (weather permitting).

In September or October Harvest services are held across all of our parishes.

In November our parishes have Remembrance services and parades with the laying of wreaths on the war memorials.

And finally an All Souls services are held in Bradwell and Tillingham where we remember those who have passed away by prayers and lighting candles.

During July and August there are Sunday evening services under a central theme at St Peter's Chapel arranged by the Chaplain. These well-attended services, conducted by a broad mix of Christian groups, are ecumenical and varied and attract congregations from a wide area.

Occasional Services

The numbers in 2015 were:

Baptisms 7

Marriages 13

Funerals (burials and ashes) 23



Baptisms:

These are mainly held during Sunday services, but can be at other times. Over the last year 7 have been held across the four parishes with preparation visits made.

Weddings:

All our Churches are popular venues for weddings between us having 13 in 2015. Preparation of couples for marriage is undertaken by the Parish Priest.

Funerals:

Pastoral visits are made before a funeral and follow-up support is given to the bereaved who are invited to the All Souls service. Feedback has shown that this is much appreciated by those who attend.

Confirmations:

During the past year we have jointly had one candidate between the four parishes. (In 2012 we had thirteen between Bradwell and St Lawrence but few of these come regularly to church now).

Home Communion

Holy Communion is taken to the sick and/or housebound by the Priest, LLM or Lay Communion Assistants.

Lent and Advent groups

Groups are held in Lent and, sometimes, Advent, mostly led by church members.

Deanery Synod Representation

Our parishes are part of the Maldon and Dengie deanery. **St Thomas'** (electoral roll 27) **St Lawrence** (electoral roll 27) **St Nicholas** (electoral roll 33) and **St James** (electoral roll 16) all have one deanery synod representative.

The Benefice

The benefice now consists of the four contiguous parishes of St Thomas in Bradwell on Sea St James in Dengie with Asheldham, St Lawrence in St Lawrence Newland and St Nicholas in Tillingham.

Ecclesiastically these villages are in the diocese of Chelmsford, the Archdeaconry of Chelmsford and the Maldon and Dengie deanery and constitute a part of the Maldon civil district.

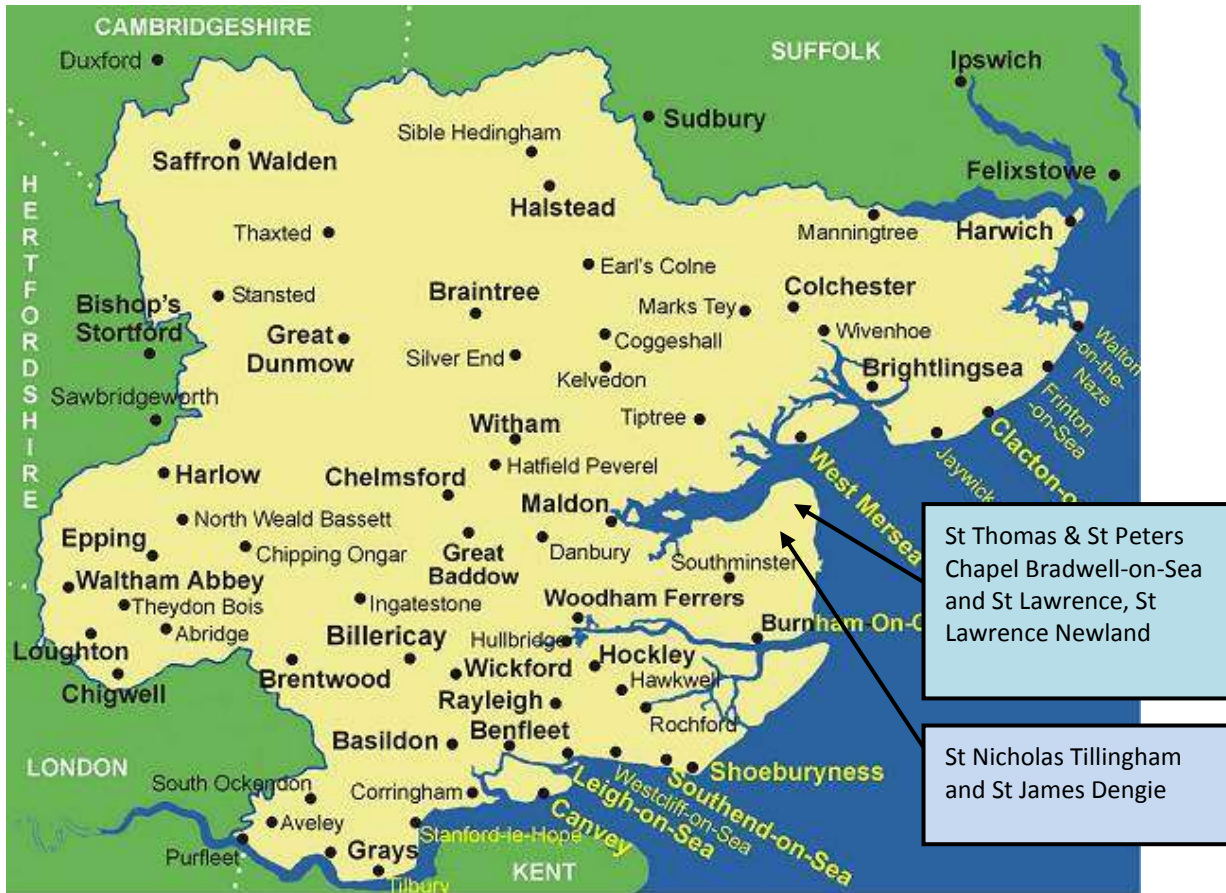
Location and local geography

Located in the north-eastern corner of the Dengie Hundred on the east coast of Essex, the area retains much of its rural character with a degree of seclusion granted by the River Blackwater forming its northern boundary, the North Sea to the east and the River Crouch



flowing along the southern limit of the peninsular. The area remains principally devoted to farming and while there are extensive cultivated fields which are almost flat former marshlands, the land rises somewhat inland and is gently undulating.

Public transport is available via several bus companies. It is possible to commute by car in under half an hour to Burnham and Maldon and under an hour to Chelmsford, Southend and Braintree, all of which provide wider shopping and work opportunities. The terminal station of the branch line at Southminster, 10 minutes from Tillingham, provides access to the main rail service and Liverpool Street can be reached in about 55 minutes.



Population

The villages of Bradwell, Tillingham, Dengie, Asheldham and St Lawrence have changed over time from being agricultural settlements with a selection of small traders in the former, to being essentially residential with a large proportion of commuters and a significant retired population.

There has been expansion with new housing developments, especially in St Lawrence where a farm sale in 1922 released land in small plots, initially for holiday use. This area on the lower ground near the river has now the majority of the permanent dwellings and accommodates the majority of the residents of the parish.

Development in Bradwell has been less extensive and has largely taken place to the east of



the village. Numerically, the population of Bradwell has changed little. In 1911 the number stood at 831 and is currently 900. St Lawrence has expanded from 144 to 1,400 in the same period.

Tillingham has also had periods of development around the village which has experienced a growth in population to 900 over the last 30 years.

Dengie and Asheldham have had little development and the population has remained static for many years. The population of these parishes is 300.

Total population of the whole benefice is 3500 according to the 2011 censuses

With no dominant occupational group the social mix in these villages is wide, with broad representation of all age groups.

Further details can be found from parish spotlight;

<http://www.chelmsford.anglican.org/parishes/advice/parish-spotlights>

Schools

Church Schools

Bradwell-on-Sea

The local primary school, St Cedd's Church of England Primary School, is an academy as part of the diocese of Chelmsford Vine Schools Trust. The school, which began in 1717, owes its foundation to Dr. Buckeridge, and a Board of Trustees now exists to continue his interests. The Board is chaired by the Priest in Charge and supported by the churchwardens of Bradwell, two co-opted members and a supporting secretary. The Rector of Bradwell is also an ex-officio member of the local governing body with both parishes, St Thomas and St Lawrence, each having representation.

St. Cedd's serves the villages of Bradwell on Sea and St Lawrence as well as providing for children outside these villages whose parents wish them to have a church-based education. The last Ofsted Inspection (June 2013) judged the school to be Requiring Improvement; the last SIAMs inspection (November 2011) judged it to be Outstanding. The Parent Teacher Association is very active in fundraising and arranging social events.

The school is keen that the Incumbent will have close links with the school community and will lead worship regularly in an engaging, flexible and varied way to match and complement the high-quality work within the school, as well as providing specialist knowledge, advice and inspiration to pupils and staff on religious and spiritual matters. Currently the school holds services in St. Thomas Church at key points in the year, and the school is keen to further develop this partnership work with the Incumbent.



St. Cedds' Church of England (VA) Primary School

Our Mission Statement

St. Cedd's Church of England School aims to provide a high quality, broad and balanced education, enabling all our children to achieve their potential as unique individuals, within a distinctive Christian ethos.

We believe in the importance of the partnership between school, home and the local churches. Their social and spiritual development is nurtured by the caring relationships experienced throughout the school community.

We hope our school, shaped by its caring ethos and Christian foundation, will provide all our children with a sense of personal worth and respect for our neighbours, enabling them to contribute fully and with confidence to the life of the wider community.

We aim to enable all our children to encounter a living faith in God during their time at St. Cedd's, which will sustain them throughout their lives.

We achieve. We believe. We care.

Tillingham

Tillingham has a primary school, St Nicholas' Church of England (VC) Primary School. They also achieved "Good" in their latest OFSTED inspection. Each week a member of the laity holds an assembly at the school and at times such as Christmas, Easter and harvest they hold services in the church itself. The Board of Governors should include a member of the PCC on it. Unfortunately this position is currently vacant.

St. Nicholas' Church of England (VC) Primary School

St Nicholas' C of E Primary School was founded on this site in 1860 to provide education for the children of the local area.

Whilst some of the building dates back to Victorian times, it has been significantly extended over the years. We now have 6 dedicated teaching bases as well as a school hall, new kitchen and two outside play areas.

The school has around 120 pupils on roll at any time and we work in five small classes. Learning is important to us all at the school, giving children the opportunity to thrive and grow in a safe and caring environment, making a big difference to the lives of the young people who come here.

Other Schools

Tillingham

There is a local Pre-School held in the Village Hall for children from two years of age. It is a Registered Charity. It is very popular and has close links with the Primary School where the majority of the children progress when old enough. The children are encouraged in many areas in preparation for this. The Pre-School recently achieved "Good" in their OFSTED inspection



Secondary School

Our parishes are in the catchment area of Ormiston Rivers Academy, 7 miles away in Burnham-on-Crouch. Children also go to other schools in the district at South Woodham Ferris and Maldon etc and Grammar schools in Southend, Chelmsford or Colchester Essex.

Parish Magazines

There are two magazines produced by our churches which cover Tillingham, Dengie with Asheldham and Bradwell and St. Lawrence. These are vehicles for advertising and promoting church/village events, for news from the church, parish councils and other organisations. The magazines contain a letter from the Priest, service and rota details. The magazines are edited and printed in the parishes. Church members and other volunteers produce and distribute the magazines.

We may look at amalgamating these magazines in the future.

The pictures show members of St Lawrence and Bradwell churches after a joint Benefice morning Communion service at St Peters Chapel on Sunday June 29th 2014.





The incumbents House

The Vicarage is in Tillingham and is approx 500m from the Church.

It was built around 1990 and is heated by an oil-fired boiler.

It is a south facing, modern detached house in a quiet cul de sac within Tillingham village. It has a self-contained hallway leading off to a study. The living area comprises a large through-lounge suitable for use as a family room and has a patio door leading into the rear garden. There is an open plan dining room/kitchen. Upstairs there are five bedrooms, one ensuite, and a family bathroom. There is no mains gas in Tillingham but the Vicarage has LPG piped in through bottles for a cooker. Central heating is oil fired and the tank is at the side of the house in the rear garden.

Outside there is a double garage to the left with a lift up and over door to the front and pedestrian access from the rear garden. It has lights and power sockets. The gardens are mostly laid out to lawn with shrub borders. The rear one is fairly large and has frequently been the venue for a Parish BBQ. The dioceses recently fitted solar panels which help with the fuel bills.

Downstairs

- 1 sitting room
- 1 study located near the main entrance
- 1 kitchen diner
- 1 cloakroom

Upstairs

- 5 bedrooms
- 1 bathroom
- 1 shower room

Outside

1 double detached garage



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