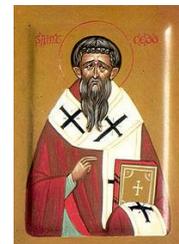


## Introduction

The Parish of East and West Tilbury and Linford is seeking a Priest in Charge (House for Duty) to lead its spiritual and pastoral care. The parish has a long history and comprises of the ancient villages of East and West Tilbury (which in their time were separate parishes), the Bata Estate created in 1932 by Tomáš Baťa, and the village of Linford which at one time was part of the parish of Mucking. It is believed that there was a settlement at East Tilbury in Saxon times and that this is probably the "Tilaburg" referred to by the Ancient Bede when recording St. Cedd's establishment of a church in this locale.



The latest recorded population exceeds 6,400. From the 1950's additional housing has been built and this continues to this day with developments both large and small in various stages of planning and construction. If some of the plans come to fruition the population could well double. It should also be noted that the proposed Lower Thames Crossing will cut through the parish when built.

There are two church buildings, St. Catherine's in East Tilbury Village which is the historic, grade I listed, parish church and the St. Francis Centre, a mid-20<sup>th</sup> building in Linford. Both have been radically improved and re-modelled in the last 6 years to make them fit for use in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, with plans in place to make repairs to the exterior of St. Catherine's.



Historic points of interest in the parish include the Tilbury and Coalhouse forts and the Bata Factory and estate.

## The Parish and our Priorities.

The present congregations are faithful and committed to the work of the church both in Sunday worship and in the wider parish.

Our main asset is our belief that we are the family of God in this place and that as the Anglican Church we are here to serve all parishioners whether members of the congregation or not.

We maintain a high profile in our community with members of the congregation getting involved in many activities. We also have two Churchwardens, Secretary, Treasurer, an active Parochial Church Council and two committed Deanery Synod representatives.

With a heart for God's mission, we aspire to:-

- build up the confidence of the congregation, through a mutual shared faith, in order to engage with those who do not see the relevance of the church today.
- welcome anyone and everyone, no matter what, if any, their church background might be, reflecting our broad church tradition.
- enable our churches to flourish as new styles of parish ministry develop.
- share the gospel outside the church walls.

The challenge, like many churches, is to change the age profile to reflect a broader cross-section of the community and attract and retain younger families.

Given the present situation in our church and in the parish, which local and national plans are set to change in the future, our identified priorities for the next five years are:-

- to engage with children and their families and the local schools.
- to relate to those moving into the parish in the various new housing developments.
- to build better links with the uniformed organisations and other youth initiatives in the parish.
- to teach the faith to new Christians and to grow in our own faith.

## What do we do?

**Our Church's PURPOSE** is "to *Worship God*, and to *grow* through developing as disciples, bringing other members of God's family into our Church, and demonstrating God's love and care". This "mission statement" was adopted at a church meeting during the incumbency of the previous Rector and reflects the fact that we have an open Baptism policy and are supportive of the re-marriage of divorced people in the church.

**The regular weekly pattern of services** at Saint Catherine's is a sung Holy Communion at 10.00 am on Sunday except on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month when a non-communion, "Family Service" is provided which has recently seen one or two new worshippers. A said communion service is celebrated on Wednesday mornings at the St.



Francis Centre at 10.00 am, with a congregation of up to 17, prior to the weekly "drop in" at 10.30 am. We also run a Sunday School once a month which is aimed at the primary school age and can have an attendance of up to 10 children. In addition to the usual festivals, a Rogation procession / service is held in West Tilbury village at the village green / farm gates etc. in the company of the Grays Town Band. An annual remembrance service is held at the Bata War memorial and is well attended by the British Legion, the local Scouts and Girl Guides as well as

many of the community.

Our Christmas Celebrations include a midnight service of Holy Communion, a "Christingle" Service (which has had a congregation of 200+) and a Carol Services at both St. Catherine's and St. Francis.



**The Priest appointed** will have the support of the laity in the following ways: -

- During this interregnum the Archdeacon commissioned our first Pastoral Assistant for some time.
- There are 6 members of the congregation that assist the priest at our Sunday service of Holy Communion by leading the worship except for those parts that require an ordained minister to preside. Our monthly family service is led entirely by the laity.
- intercessions at the Sunday morning services are led by members of the congregation on a rota basis.
- the Old and New Testament readings are read by members of the congregation on a rota basis.
- there are three regular servers and six communion assistants who administer the chalice on a rota basis.
- members of the congregation care for the Churchyard during the summer months.
- members of the congregation assist at baptisms, weddings and funerals.

The liturgy that we use has been developed by our previous Rector, using "Common Worship", to meet the needs of the parish by embracing a variety of traditions. The liturgy will, no doubt, continue to develop with input from our new priest. Sadly, the organist that accompany us had to give up because of problems with her hands and our music is now provided from recordings. Our hymns are taken from "Celebration Hymnal for Everyone".

We have a close working relationship with the Linford Methodist Church with whom we hold a joint Bible Study once a month. In Lent we usually have a weekly series of studies again with our Methodist friends

Some of our congregation are part of an "Open the Book" team that give dramatised Bible Readings each Monday morning in the Assembly of the Woodside Academy Primary School in an adjoining parish.

### We reach out to our parish in several ways.

- We provide a "drop in" coffee morning each Wednesday at St. Francis after the morning service for members of the congregation and others. This is much appreciated by those that join us.
- We operate a distribution centre for the Thurrock foodbank on a Thursday morning and invite folk in for refreshments whether they have a voucher for food or not. This provides a friendly atmosphere for clients.
- During the summer months, we open St. Catherine's in the afternoon on the last Sunday and Bank Holiday Mondays for refreshments.
- Since the redevelopment of St. Catherine's and given its proximity to Coalhouse Fort we are working increasingly closely with the fort project, have accommodated classes of schoolchildren and provided a venue for some of their events.
- We also hold several Social events during the year including a "pancake evening", austerity lunches of homemade soups and bread during Lent, and a Harvest Supper. Everyone is welcome to join us.
- Although part of their purpose is fund raising we also see our Summer Fête and Christmas Bazaar (both of which are held in St. Catherine's) as opportunities to present the church to the parish.
- Each year we act as a focal point for the collection of "shoebboxes" for the Samaritans Purse appeal. This is supported both by our own congregation and others in the parish.



To ensure that our parishioners may know what is going on we use posters, leaflets and social media and our website ([www.stcatherinesthurrock.org.uk](http://www.stcatherinesthurrock.org.uk)). We also produce a monthly parish magazine "Pewtalk" which has a print run of 125 copies of which some 90 are delivered directly to parishioners.

### The wider context

#### Thurrock Deanery

The Deanery of Thurrock covers the same area as the Unitary Authority of Thurrock, stretching the length of more than 18 miles of Thames riverfront from Purfleet to Fobbing, with an area of over 64 square miles. We have 23 different church buildings which reflect the full diversity of the Church of England. There are currently approximately 20 Clergy, 10 Readers/LLM's and many other developing lay ministries. Thurrock is a very mixed economy area, including retail, industrial and agricultural areas, large urban towns and small rural villages. Over the past 25 years the area has seen significant change and growth in population. Among the major changes which have occurred have been the construction and opening of the London Gateway Port at Corringham, the development of the Royal Opera House performing arts and cultural park at Purfleet and a significant increase in the construction of new housing. We are working towards the formation of locally agreed groupings of parishes which will become Mission & Ministry Units (MMU's). This is part of the Diocese of Chelmsford's 'Transforming Presence' change programme, see... [www.transformingpresence.org.uk](http://www.transformingpresence.org.uk)

We strongly believe that the further development and spread of the Gospel will be significantly enhanced by the closer working together of local churches. There is the expectation that the parish of East & West Tilbury and Linford will work more collaboratively with the untied benefices of Corringham & Fobbing and Orsett,

Bulphan & Horndon on the Hill plus the parish of Stanford-le-Hope to eventually form a Mission & Ministry Unit (MMU) covering the east of the Deanery. It may be at some stage in the future that other parishes may also join but this is yet to be discussed or agreed.

We are likely to end up with 3 MMU's which broadly follow the geography of the deanery (west, central and east). We have also identified that the following factors need to be considered during the MMU formation process. These are...

- Number of church buildings
- Size of congregations
- Local geography (i.e. major roads, railways & rivers)
- Population - both current and future forecast (see table below)
- Number of occasional offices (baptisms, weddings & funerals)
- Local Church tradition
- Personalities of those in key leadership positions

Whilst Thurrock has seen many changes over recent years, the pace of change is likely to quicken as we look forward to the next 10 to 15 years. The table below shows the expected changes in population with some areas seeing considerable and rapid increases in population. When one takes these factors into account, it is possible that we might have some units of considerably varying sizes which will in turn require differing resources.

**Population of Thurrock (by parish)**

Parish Number	Parish Name	2001 <i>All Ages</i>	2011 <i>All Ages</i>	2025-30 <i>Estimate</i>
15.01	Mardyke Team	29,426	33,973	47,304
15.03	Chadwell St Mary	9,463	9,864	10,839
15.04+a	Corringham + Fobbing	13,687	13,195	13,368
15.05	East & West Tilbury & Linford	6,261	6,016	6,890
15.07	Grays Thurrock Team	33,599	43,036	69,052
15.09	Grays North	10,849	10,547	11,697
15.10+a,b	Orsett, Bulphan & Horndon-o-t-Hill	5,936	6,464	6,742
15.12	Stanford-le-Hope	16,652	15,776	17,681
15.13	Stifford	5,793	6,384	6,384
15.14	Tilbury Town/Docks	11,462	12,450	14,990
<b>15</b>	<b>Thurrock Deanery</b>	<b>143,128</b>	<b>157,705</b>	<b>204,947</b>

I am very happy to speak with any prospective candidate to provide further information or to answer any questions. Please contact me on 01375 377379 or RevBarlow@talktalk.net

*Darren Barlow, Area Dean*

### The Diocese: A message from Bishop Stephen

In the Chelmsford Diocese we believe that God is calling his church to be a transforming presence. Our vision is that the church - that is the people of God here in Essex and East London - should be a transforming presence in every one of our parishes.

These are our priorities -

- To inhabit the world distinctively
- To evangelise effectively
- To hold ourselves accountable to one another and to God for the stewardship of the gospel
- To re imagine the way we minister so that each ordained minister and each individual Christian discovers their part in God's ministry and so that each church flourishes.

To this end we are looking for priests who are excited by this vision of becoming a church which is itself transformed, and which is becoming a more visible and effective presence in the huge diversity of communities that make up this most exciting and energetic part of England. There are many challenges ahead of us.

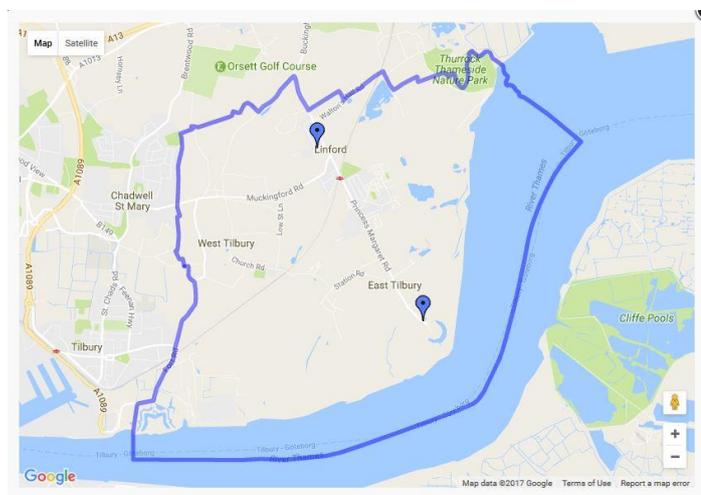
- We are a diocese generously subsidised by the national church. We need to become financially self-sufficient.
- Leadership often seems distant. We are creating patterns of leadership that are closer to the parishes. And we are looking to develop missionary leadership at all levels of church life. Nearly half our clergy will retire in the next ten years. We need to find out how to minister with fewer stipendiary clergy and with a re-imagining of how stipendiary ministry works. We need to re-organise the way parishes relate to each other in what we are calling Mission and Ministry Units.
- Some of our congregations still think ministry is what Vicars do. We have a vision of ministry where the whole people of God are involved in the whole of God's ministry. We are also experimenting with new forms of authorised lay ministry.
- Church must be a safe place. All those in ministry will be expected to undergo training that will equip them to respond well in situations associated with safeguarding.
- Levels of church going are below the national average. We need to get evangelism on to the agenda and into the lifeblood of every church. We encourage and train churches to put on weekends of mission and outreach. One of our aspirations is that every benefice should have a trained lay evangelism enabler.
- We are developing missionary discipleship, so that every church in the diocese is a place where Christians are formed in order to be sent out in witness and service.

Despite planning for a future with fewer stipendiary clergy, we remain as committed as ever to the local church. And what is the local church, but that community of men and women gathered around Christ, and living and sharing the gospel in the networks and neighbourhoods of their lives? But we need priests to lead and to serve. We know we need to change. We can only be a transforming presence when we have allowed God to transform us. Therefore at the heart of all we do is a longing for intimacy with God and a renewed life of prayer. First and foremost a priest is a minister of the word and sacrament. All ministry flows from this. But a priest shares the ministry of the bishop, therefore presbyteral ministry will increasingly be a ministry of oversight, guiding, nurturing and directing the mission of God's church in the communities we serve.

It is an exciting time to be part of God's missionary movement for the world, and the Diocese of Chelmsford is an exciting place to serve. We have a clear vision and we are looking to appoint clergy who will share this with us. In every parish we long to see each person and each community grow in faithfulness and ministry so that together we may serve in the world and Christ may be made known.

**+Stephen**

## What is it like to live in the parish?



**The Parish** is divided in 3 by the C2C railway line and has a population of some 6,400, most of whom live in post war housing estates at East Tilbury and Linford close to the railway. The housing is mostly private with both owned and rented properties with a mixture of houses and flats. A significant part of East Tilbury is a unique development from the 1930's when a "company town" providing accommodation for the Bata factory's workforce was built by the Czech company. Although the factory closed in 2005 the site is still in use for light industry etc. Recently several hundred houses have been built and further, very significant housing development is in the initial planning stages. West Tilbury Village and the former

Bata shoe factory and housing estate in East Tilbury are conservation areas and there are a few other listed buildings/scheduled ancient monuments within the parish.

Those living in the parish are representative of all age groups and includes many young families with some 24% of the total population are under 18. Employment is both local and with a significant number of people commuting to London using the East Tilbury to Fenchurch Street C2C train service. Car usage is extensive both for work, shopping (esp. lakeside and Bluewater) and leisure - Southend being close by.

There is some farming in the parish being mixed arable with some livestock and a recently installed solar farm at "Barvills" in East Tilbury village. There is a small industrial estate at East Tilbury, a Tarmac Linford Blocks factory (which incidentally donated all the building blocks for the extension of St. Catherine's), a small industrial estate at Low Street and an aggregate recycling site in East Tilbury close to the Thames. There is a private old people's home at Linford.

Although there is limited shopping within the parish, with small parades of shops in Linford and on the Bata estate where there is a small Co-op supermarket and thriving Post Office. All the major supermarkets have stores nearby and there are major shopping centres at Basildon, "Lakeside" and "Bluewater". The latter being just the other side of the Dartford river crossing. London, Fenchurch Street, can be reached in under an hour by train.

The medical services in the area include, in the parish, three G.P.s surgeries. There are dental practices close by in Tilbury and Chadwell-St-Mary. Opticians are to be found in Chadwell and Corringham and there is a major hospital at Basildon with an Accident and Emergency department. In the East Tilbury parade of shops there is a pharmacy.

Wildlife abounds in the parish with the riverside land to the east of Coalhouse Fort being a site of special scientific interest (SSSI) and the River Thames mudflats part of an internationally designated Ramsar site because of the large number of wading birds. There is the river Thames itself and nature reserves at the Thurrock Thameside Nature Park cared for by the Essex Wildlife Trust and the RSPB reserve at Rainham Marshes.

The parish is something of an undiscovered historical "hotspot" which includes both Tilbury and Coalhouse river defence forts, the "Bata" factory estate and St. Catherine's church which we believe, from our reading of the ancient Bede's "Ecclesiastical history of the English People", may well be at the "Tilaburg" from where Cede started his mission to the East Saxons.

Other recreational opportunities include several parks and open spaces for walking and, of course, for those who appreciate the values of the English seaside, Southend-on-Sea with its promenade, beaches, restaurants and amusements.

**Public transport** comprises an excellent train service to London, Fenchurch Street and Shoeburyness, which interconnects with the London Underground at several points en route. The 374 route is a limited bus service between Grays and Basildon with 3 stops within the parish. It is every 90 minutes during the week and every 3 hours on Saturdays. There is no service on Sundays. Vehicle access to the southern part of the Parish can be hampered by the level crossings at East Tilbury station and Low Street which can cause considerable congestion at peak times.

**Ethnically** the population is predominately white with small numbers of black, Asian and Chinese; 64% percent profess to be Christians (although it will be no surprise that this is not reflected in the numbers attending corporate worship) with 29% saying they follow no religion.

**Children and youth services** within the parish comprise a strong Scout and Guide organisation with their own premises, the Linford Wanderers football club, a boys and girls club and the Linford Methodist Church run a "Yippee" club for primary school children. There are a variety of nursery and pre-school facilities including parent's and toddler's sessions at Linford Methodists. There is a primary school in the parish which was the first school in Thurrock to welcome an "Open the Book" team. Sadly, after a change of head teacher the team were no longer welcome.

## The parish properties

### St. Catherine's, East Tilbury Village

The historic medieval church of St. Catherine consists of nave and chancel, north aisle, and north porch, the main entrance to the building. At the south west corner of the nave is the first two storeys of a tower and these accommodate the vestries, the remainder of the tower was never completed. In 2015 an extension was added to the west end of the building to provide kitchen and toilet accommodation. At the same time as the extension was added, the interior of the church was re-ordered with modern heating and seating being installed. On our website ([www.stcatherinesthurrock.org.uk](http://www.stcatherinesthurrock.org.uk)) there is a link to a video which shows what was done. The roofs were also renewed in 2015/6, financed by a grant from the Listed Places of Worship roof repair fund. The purpose of all this work was to make the building not only fit for worship in the 21<sup>st</sup> century



but also to provide a practical space for other activities that the church / community might wish to put on. This picture of the Queen's birthday celebrations illustrates such a use.

Internally, the chancel is furnished with a high altar on a raised dais, a nave altar, an ancient Tudor pulpit, frontals chest etc. The Nave is furnished with a brass "eagle" lectern and 100 modern cloth upholstered timber chairs which can be rearranged and stacked when required. There are a further 50 upholstered metal framed chairs stored on "dollies" in a cupboard in the kitchen. The new extension comprises of the kitchen and two toilets, one of which is designed for disabled access. The purpose of the changes made in 2015 was to produce a building that could be used for

a multitude of purposes - and so it has proved.



The latest quinquennial survey was completed in 2016 and identifies several external areas that require work. This was always part of the development plans for the church with the external works to be done once the building was made fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The Church is set in a pleasant churchyard which is still in use for burials. We are in the process of obtaining a faculty for an area of it to be set aside for the interment of ashes as the presently designated areas are reaching capacity.

### The St. Francis Centre, Linford

This is a mid 20<sup>th</sup> century pre-cast concrete building that was completely internally refurbished 7 years ago. It was internally redecorated in January 2017. Inside the building there is a main hall, a kitchen, small office and two toilets one of which is designed for disabled access. The hall is provided with a number of "Gopac" folding tables, some round metal café style tables and 50 stackable chairs. It stands in a grassed plot which we have used in the past for parish picnics.



The building is used on a regular basis by several groups including the local Women's Institute, an adult fitness group, a children's gymnastics class and the "Linford Ladies" as well as our "drop in" and foodbank distribution. The premises have a broadband connection and recently we provided computer access for those that need internet access (particularly for job searches) after the local library was destroyed by fire. A recent quinquennial survey has identified very little that needs to be done.

### The Rectory



This is a four-bedroom house in Somerset Road, Linford (a little distance from the St. Francis Centre) which was built in the 1950's. It is a semi-detached two storey-built parsonage, of brick cavity walls but rendered externally, under concrete interlocking tiled roof slopes. Windows are UPVC as are rainwater goods.

The house has been extended by two storeys to the side to include a study. To the rear a Conservatory and single storey extension have both been added. A further single storey porch has been built to the front.

On the first floor there are three bedrooms within the original building, with the rear right bedroom having a shower compartment and wash basin. There is a bathroom containing a bath with shower over, toilet with wash basin in the original building, there is one bedroom within extension.

The ground floor consists of a Porch, Hall, through Lounge, Dining room in the rear extension, kitchen, utility room and toilet.

The house sits on an adequately sized plot mostly laid to lawn but with some paved pathway and patio areas. Boundaries are marked by a brick wall to the front and close boarded fencing to the sides and rear elevation. The front driveway consists of coloured stonework sweeping round to the front porch. The original grassed area has now been covered with a significant bed of stone chippings.

### **West Tilbury Churchyard**

Although the church of St. James in West Tilbury is now a private dwelling there is a churchyard surrounding it. This has been declared "closed" for new burials other than those into existing graves. The parish has no responsibility for its upkeep which is now undertaken by Thurrock council. However, the PCC are required to insure it.

### **Parish finances**

The parish is financially sound and pays its Parish Share in full. The Annual Report and Accounts can be accessed via the parish website [www.stcatherinesthurrock.org.uk](http://www.stcatherinesthurrock.org.uk).