

# PARISH PROFILE FOR THE PARISHES OF

## ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, DANBURY

**Location:** Church Green, Main Road, Danbury CM3 4NG

**Website:** [www.stjohnbaptistdanbury.org.uk/](http://www.stjohnbaptistdanbury.org.uk/)



## ST MARY THE VIRGIN, LT BADDOW

**Location:** Little Baddow, Chelmsford CM3 4BE

**Website:** [www.littlebaddowchurches.org.uk/](http://www.littlebaddowchurches.org.uk/)



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## 1. THE BIGGER PICTURE

### **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**

The parishes of Danbury and Little Baddow are part of the Compass Churches MMU within the Deanery of Chelmsford South. An MMU is a cluster of parishes which will enjoy the benefits of mutual fellowship and co-operation while maintaining full independence.

### **THE COMPASS CHURCHES MMU (written by Revd Terry Brown Chairman)**

In 2012 the Diocese of Chelmsford launched its new vision, proclaiming its desire that every congregation in Essex and East London should be a transforming presence in the communities where God had placed them.

MMUs arose out of “Transforming Presence” as a way to ensure that every community is served and that resources are deployed strategically whilst leaving room and incentive for growth. The MMU is an attempt to develop an approach to Ministry where parishes work together and plan for the future. It creates opportunities to decide to do things differently.

Compass Churches has been formed of the benefices of Danbury, Little Baddow, Sandon, East Hanningfield, South Woodham Ferrers, Woodham Ferrers and Bicknacre, Stock, West Hanningfield, Downham, South Hanningfield and Ramsden Bellhouse. There will be 3 full time and 1 part time Stipendiary priests. There is one Licensed Lay minister and one curate and several Non-Stipendiary priests.

Clergy and lay people have been meeting weekly for prayer and a series of consultation evenings have taken place. The MMU has developed a paper on its purpose, aims and organisation, which PCCs have agreed and the Mission and Ministry committee have approved, and we will be commissioned on February 10<sup>th</sup> 2018.

We have a Clergy Leader, Revd Terry Brown, Rector of Sandon and a Lay co-chair, Mrs. Margaret Partridge, Churchwarden of South Woodham Ferrers. We have appointed a secretary and treasurer together with representatives from each Parish Church.

It is subdivided into 3 clusters – Little Baddow and Danbury are linked to Sandon and East Hanningfield. The Group organisation enables the parishes to enjoy the benefits of mutual fellowship and co-operation while maintaining full independence. It offers a community of support and advice to members and enables them to hear of successes that prove positive and encouraging for all to share. We look forward to working together in the future.

### **CHELMSFORD SOUTH DEANERY (written by Christine Horton Lay Chair)**

Chelmsford was split into two deaneries as, with 40 churches in all, it made meetings very large and impersonal. There are thoughts to bring them back together as there are now less clergy posts and we do share projects. Chelmsford South Deanery consists of 20 churches, 8 in the city and 11 in surrounding country, with one LEP. 5 of the city churches will form the SW Chelmsford MMU. 11 of the rural churches will be in the Compass Churches MMU (see below). The LEP, and 3 of the city churches are looking to liaise with other churches which might be in Chelmsford North Deanery.

The deanery has 3 meetings a year. A Deanery Service at the end of the year to which all are welcome, met the desire for a more spiritual dimension to the deanery meetings. We usually meet 96+% of our Parish Share and have a good reputation for paying this in the Diocese.

A new Area Dean is about to be commissioned and we look forward to new appointments and to making new incumbents welcome.

## 2. WHO WE ARE

St John the Baptist, Danbury and St Mary the Virgin, Little Baddow are two caring congregations in two beautiful churches, one with a strong musical heritage, one with an important Covenant with the URC, in an attractive part of Essex.

We are seeking a strong, enthusiastic and empathetic priest who is prepared to accept the challenges involved in encouraging growth in our congregations and be involved and visible in the pastoral care and community activities in both villages and to ensure that we play a full role within the Compass MMU and the Deanery of Chelmsford South.

### Our vision

The churches are best described as having a central, broad church tradition with a Eucharistic background but open to a range of services including a monthly informal service.

### Danbury

Our Mission Statement is:

***"Since we have received God's reconciling love through Jesus Christ as Lord, we seek to reach out into the community in love, welcoming all without discrimination into God's family; to proclaim the Gospel faithfully in word and deed; to nurture all in faith and understanding; and to encourage each one to recognise and exercise their gifts, to the praise and glory of God and in the power of the Holy Spirit."***

### Little Baddow

***"We aim to show and share God's love locally, ecumenically and in the wider world"***

Our parish encompasses congregants who have come from a range of free churches as well as backgrounds that are more catholic. We as a congregation have a wide variety of views, but tend to enjoy the dialogue which inevitably springs from such differences of opinion in a very good-natured way. We feel especially blessed because of our close links and Covenant with the URC Chapel and just like to think of ourselves as Christians in Little Baddow rather than any denomination.

### Our strengths

We can offer you:

- Two well maintained listed historic churches in busy neighbouring villages
- Two supportive parish teams of Churchwardens, PCCs, Readers, retired Priests, licensed preachers, organists and choirs to work alongside the priest with loyalty, hard work, dedication and friendship and many willing volunteers to support all aspects of church life
- Payment of our annual parish shares in full and on time
- An active and progressive Mission and Ministry Unit for mutual support

## **Our hopes for our new incumbent**

Both churches have had both female and male Priests in the recent past and welcome applicants of either gender. We hope you are a man or woman who can offer us:

- Strong leadership, an open and communicative relationship and excellent communication skills with everyone involved in the church and church life and people of all ages and backgrounds. Someone who is committed to a life of personal and corporate prayer, secure in their faith and able to develop our spirituality and the preaching and teaching ministry of the churches.
- Someone keen to personally develop, maintain and encourage pastoral, bereavement and support work for the sick and needy in our congregations and local communities, and restore an active and visible priestly involvement in pastoral care, with the continued support of lay members.
- A commitment to working and being visible and active in both villages, interacting with the community and community organisations. A person with a cheerful outlook whose sense of good humour and enthusiasm encourages all sorts of parish participation.
- A willingness to build relationships with local schools, particularly the church school in Danbury which serves both villages.
- An ability to provide a balance between reaching out and engaging with all ages to encourage newcomers, and supporting our traditional worship and cherishing the established members of the church, with the eagerness to expand our congregations and enhance the welcome of the churches to all, making them feel valued and cared for.
- A commitment to ecumenism and a willingness to build relationships with other village churches and to work jointly and in the context of the Covenant with Little Baddow URC.
- A knowledge and love of music and choral singing to enrich and cherish our musical heritage.
- A willingness to be a key participant and able to take a leading role in the Compass Mission and Ministry Unit (MMU) and its role in the Deanery.

## **MEMBERS OF OUR CHURCHES**

### **Danbury**

In 2017 there were 106 names on the Church Electoral Roll. The majority (70%) of the congregation are over 65 and have been attending the church for at least 10 years, many for over 20 years. 20% of the congregation are between 50-65 years of age. 70% usually attend the Sunday 10 a.m. service; other services have smaller but loyal congregations.

### **Little Baddow**

In 2017 there were 69 names on the Church Electoral Roll. This and our congregation include significant numbers from outside the parish who appreciate our church tradition and approach. The majority of the congregation are over 60 with most others in their 50s and only a few younger members apart from Messy Church which does attract families and children.

## **PATRONS**

The Patron of the Parish of St John the Baptist, Danbury is The Rt. Hon Lord Fitzwalter.

The Patron of the Parish of St Mary the Virgin, Little Baddow is The Bishop of Chelmsford.

## **MEMBERS OF 'THE TEAM'**

### **Danbury**

At St John's we have one Reader, retired with PTO, David Alderton, who has recently moved to live in Brentwood, but will continue to support us through the vacancy. We have two Authorised Local Preachers, Janet Arthurs and Jenny Molyneux Berry. Our churchwardens are Betty Sinclair and Alex Cooper. The PCC Treasurer is Michael Green and the PCC Secretary is Sue Ferguson. The Parish employs one part-time secretary - Nicky Telling. We are supported by our Honorary retired Priest, Revd Chris Poulard.

### **Little Baddow**

At St Mary's we have two Readers, Brian Gilders retired with PTO and Charles Cope. Charles now lives in a neighbouring Parish. He is supporting us through the vacancy but may focus on his new Parish after this. We are blessed with two retired Priests, Revd Canon Christine McCafferty and Revd Chris Poulard, who help and support us, particularly during the vacancy. Our churchwardens are John Wheeldon and Peter Martin, PCC Treasurer is Richard Godden and the PCC Secretary is Pat Breeze.

Our Covenant with the URC Chapel is very important to us and means that their Minister Revd Christine Fowler and Elders are fully members of "The team". We attend each other's PCC/Elders meetings and were on the interview panel for their Minister.

## **MUSICAL HERITAGE**

### **Danbury**

St John's has a long tradition of and is well known for good music. The choir attends most of the Sunday 10.00 a.m. services. We typically have a SATB choir of 15-18 on Sunday mornings and 35-40 on Feast Days. The music is organised and led by the Director of Music and organist, Paul Hagger, who is overall responsible to the priest for music in worship. Danbury is fortunate in having two other well-qualified organists in the worshipping community.

The styles of music used in worship are wide ranging and leaning towards the more traditional. Congregational singing is normally accompanied using the organ, but the piano is played when appropriate. At the Sunday morning Eucharists three settings of the service are in use on a monthly rotation and the choir normally sings an anthem.

### **Little Baddow**

St Mary's has an occasional choir which sings about 8 times a year and an organist and pianist who share the 10 am services.

## **3. CHURCH SERVICES**

Our priest leads a 10 am service at either Danbury or Little Baddow and other 10 am services are either lay-led or led by our honorary assistant retired priests.

## 4A. CHURCH SERVICES AT ST JOHN BAPTIST

### PATTERN OF SERVICES (Prior to the Vacancy)

	1st Sunday	2nd Sunday	3rd Sunday	4th Sunday	5th Sunday
<b>8.00am</b>	No service	<b>Holy Communion</b>	No service	<b>Holy Communion</b>	No service
<b>10.00am</b>	<b>Parish Communion</b>	<b>Morning Worship</b>	<b>Parish Communion</b>	<b>Café Praise –</b> an informal service with refreshments held in our Meeting Room	<b>Come together Eucharist with St Mary's Little Baddow</b>
<b>6.30pm</b> (4.30 in winter)	No service	<b>Evensong (1662)</b>	No service	<b>Evensong (1662)</b>	No service

### Average Sunday attendances are:

<b>08.00</b>	<b>Communion</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>10.00</b>	<b>Eucharist</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>10.00</b>	<b>Morning Prayer</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>10.00</b>	<b>Café Praise</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>18.30</b>	<b>Evensong</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>08:30</b>	<b>Wednesday Celtic Morning Prayer</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>11:15</b>	<b>Thursday Eucharist</b>	<b>15</b>



On Easter Sunday 2017 we had 142 at the 10am Eucharist.

In 2017 on Christmas Eve we had 369 at the 5pm Christingle Service and 87 at Midnight Mass of the Nativity. On Christmas Day there were 112 at 10am Christmas Praise.



We are pleased to offer a variety of services during the month at 10 am and Café Praise is becoming increasingly popular with regulars and newcomers alike. A growing number of people of all ages say, 'I can bring my friend to this!'. We ensure that there is an alternative form of service at Little Baddow for the few who prefer a different choice to what we are offering.

In 2017 there were 9 marriages, 19 funeral services conducted in church and 14 funerals conducted elsewhere.

There were 6 infant baptisms and 2 children and 1 adult were baptised. The majority of baptisms currently take place at noon on a Sunday. There is also a weekly Thursday Eucharist at 11.15 a.m. with a loyal and regular congregation.

The church actively organises a number of annual ecumenical services within the village such as the Women's World Day of Prayer, United Act of Worship on Good Friday, Carols at Eve's Corner and Remembrance Sunday.

Clergy and choir are robed for most 10 a.m. services.



#### 4B. CHURCH SERVICES AT ST MARY'S LITTLE BADDOW

**PATTERN OF SERVICES** (This is being maintained during the interregnum.)

	1st Sunday	2nd Sunday	3rd Sunday	4th Sunday	5th Sunday
<b>8.00am</b>	<b>Holy Communion BCP</b>	No service	<b>Holy Communion BCP</b>	No service	No service
<b>10.00am</b>	<b>Morning Prayer</b>	<b>Parish Eucharist</b>	<b>Informal Service</b>	<b>United Eucharist with URC alternating between churches</b>	<b>Come together Eucharist with St John's Danbury</b>
<b>6.30pm</b> Held in St Andrew's during the Winter	No service	<b>Evensong BCP with URC alternating between churches</b>	No service	<b>Evensong BCP</b>	No service

**Average Sunday attendances are:**

<b>08.00</b>	<b>Communion</b>	<b>8-10</b>
<b>10.00</b>	<b>Eucharist</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>10.00</b>	<b>Morning Prayer</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>10.00</b>	<b>Informal service</b>	<b>10-30</b>
<b>18.30</b>	<b>Evensong</b>	<b>10-12</b>
<b>09:00</b>	<b>Monday Celtic Morning Prayer</b>	<b>4-8</b>
<b>10:00</b>	<b>Thursday House Communion</b>	<b>8-12</b>



There is a weekly Celtic Morning Prayer (currently lay led) at 9 am every Monday held in St Andrew's and a weekly House Communion is held in members' houses on a Thursday at 10 am. We have an active Messy Church group. Messy Church has now moved to quarterly major events at Christmas, Easter, summer and autumn (Shoebox Sunday). These major events are geared to all ages and attract a distinct and younger attendance of about 70 people for Messy Nativity.

On Easter Sunday 2017 we held our United Service and Communion at the URC Chapel so returned a nil attendance at St Mary's! In 2017 on Christmas Eve there were 29 at Midnight Mass of the Nativity. On Christmas Day there were 100 at 10am Carols Around the Crib. This was followed by Holy Communion attended by 26 people.

Café Church has not taken off and is being replaced with an alternative informal service designed and led by members of the congregation.

In 2017 there were 3 marriages, 4 funeral services and 6 interments of ashes conducted. There were 6 infant baptisms and 1 child was baptised.

The priest wears vestments and has a server and chalice assistants; a bell is rung for communion.

## **5A. OTHER CHURCHES IN DANBURY**

Within the village are The United Reformed Church, The Roman Catholic Church of the English Martyrs (joined with Holy Trinity, South Woodham Ferrers) and The Mission Evangelical Church.

## **5B. THE COVENANT AT LITTLE BADDOW**

Our covenant and joint working with the URC Chapel is integral to all our work and takes precedence over external links.

It is now some 12 years old and is reviewed, strengthened and renewed every 5 years and endorsed and signed by the Bishop and URC Moderator as well as the churches.

It is summed up by its introduction and statement of intent:

**We, the members of St Mary's Church and the United Reformed Church, therefore agree that we will endeavour increasingly not to do separately what it is better to do together.**

This includes:

- One 10 am service a month is united and alternates between the two churches
- One 6.30 pm service a month is united and alternates between the two churches
- Major festivals including Easter Sunday, Good Friday and Harvest are united and alternate yearly between the two churches
- We have a URC representative on our PCC and we have a representative on their Elders meeting
- Lent Study groups are joint and held in attendees' homes
- For the last two years we have had additional series of joint house study groups again held in attendees' homes
- Our pastoral work is joint and organised via the joint visiting group
- We do joint fundraising for the Karen Umpium Camp (which is both churches' mission link), Christian Aid and Shoe Box Sunday
- We meet three times a year as the Little Baddow Christian Council (also including Roman Catholics and other denominations) to plan our activities
- Both churchwardens were on the short listing and interview panels for their Minister
- Neither church embarks on any new initiative without discussing with the other if it can better be done together
- We develop a joint action plan each year and are about to commence developing the one for 2018
- We have a joint website [www.littlebaddowchurches.org.uk](http://www.littlebaddowchurches.org.uk)



## **LITTLE BADDOW UNITED REFORMED CHURCH (written by the URC Chapel)**

Little Baddow Chapel was founded in 1661 and has a rich history with close links to North America. This is through Thomas Hooker (The Father of American Democracy) and John Elliot (Missionary to the Indians). There is an annual joint Little Baddow village thanksgiving service held to celebrate their lives. We are still in contact with a number of American connections and two of our recent ministers have been Americans.

The chapel was built in 1707 and is attractively situated with an environmentally managed churchyard with a modern Village History Centre to one side. Our close working relationship with St Marys is formally recognised in the Covenant and is of utmost importance to us. We are a small active church of about 25 members and thus value the added dimensions to worship which our association with St Marys encourages. We take seriously the pledge to do nothing separately that is better done together.

Joint Christian outreach to the village is important to us in a village where village and church life meld together and there is a real sense of community and where all are helped and cared for regardless of denomination or church attendance.

Our current minister, The Rev Christine Fowler, is at the early part of the second year of a three year ministry. She is very supportive and involved in our relationship with St Mary's which is a prerequisite uppermost in our minds when calling a minister.

Our aim as Little Baddow United Reformed Church is to continue to work and grow together in understanding and fellowship, and to increase our involvement and relationship over the years.



## 6. PARISH ACTIVITIES

### Danbury

In Danbury a wide range of activities take place during the church year and our Events Committee co-ordinate and manage the majority of these. A comprehensive account of activities can be found in the annual church report for 2017, available on our website at [www.stjohnbaptistchurch.org.uk/news](http://www.stjohnbaptistchurch.org.uk/news). Events are very much part of our outreach to the local community and have a valuable social function as well as a fundraising focus. Highlights have included Flower Festivals, Christmas tree Festivals, 'Not the Last Night of the Proms' and our Tower and Teas afternoons.



There is a monthly Men's night and Ladies' lunch. We hold Lent Courses with St Mary's. There is a Lay Communion Team within our church. The church sponsors children in Ethiopia, Zimbabwe and India and has links with Bible translators in the Central African Republic.

### Little Baddow

In Little Baddow our pastoral work and links to most village organisations are very important to us. The church is actively involved in many village organisations from the Parish Council to most activity and voluntary groups. We see ourselves as an integral and important part of village life. It was revealing that when we asked the congregation their priorities for our new priest that pastoral work and links to community activities came top by a wide margin together with the priest being involved and visible in these activities.

Key village activities where the church leads or plays a significant part include:

- Little Baddow News the village wide magazine going to 500 of the 650 homes in the village – edited and produced with the URC
- St Andrew's Rooms – the church community hall in the centre of the village which is used constantly by a wide range of village groups as well as the church (it was originally the church school before it merged with St John's school Danbury)
- Angels – support for vulnerable people led by our Alison Buchanan Pastoral Assistant
- Parish Visiting Group – an ecumenical group visiting the sick, bereaved or lonely
- Community Care Group – set up by the church but now with wider membership. This provides support and meals where needed with representatives covering different areas of the village plus weekly Tuesday and monthly Sunday lunches
- Hospital/doctors visiting transport service
- Pints of View – a monthly men's discussion group in the pub – church led but open and attended by men with a wide range of views
- Open Gardens – the major village event and a real community event which involves those not otherwise involved in the church. It is a fundraiser for church funds (raising

£6,000 plus pa) but involves over 100 volunteers, 20 gardens, 6 buses, other attractions, an art exhibition, lunches and often over 1,000 visitors

- Monthly coffee morning for Umpium and Traidcraft which has become a focal point for meeting and catching up with neighbours
- Fundraising to raise much of the £6,000 to fund all the salaries for the Umpium refugee school as well as funds for the church through events involving the village



### **St John's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

<http://www.st-johns-danbury.essex.sch.uk>

This school was formed by a merger of the Danbury and Little Baddow church schools. The churches are represented on the Governing Body by the incumbent as an ex-officio member and by 2 foundation members. At present the churches are represented by Pat Breeze, PCC Secretary of St Mary's and David Hartnell, the Youth worker from Danbury Mission, as no member of St John's congregation felt able to fulfil the role at this time.

A weekly assembly at the school is led by a team comprising the incumbent and the school liaison officer from St Johns, a reader from St Mary's and the Youth worker from Danbury Mission. The school holds a carol service and an Easter service and a service for Yr. 6 leavers in St John's church and classes visit the church as part of their RE. The headmaster, Mr Jona Davies, is keen to develop the links with the church and would welcome the pastoral support of a priest for the staff and children.

The Prayer garden at the school opened by the late Rt Revd John Wraw, Bishop of Bradwell.



## 7. THE VILLAGES AND PARISHES OF DANBURY AND LITTLE BADDOW



The villages are in rural Essex, 33 miles (55 km) NE of central London. Danbury has a population of around 6,250 and Little Baddow a population of around 1,600. Open countryside and deciduous woodland surround them, much of which is protected by the Essex Wildlife Trust and the National Trust, providing a wide range of walks.

Danbury and various villages around Maldon. Little Baddow does face a range of rural issues including limited public transport (there is one infrequent bus which is under threat of closure) plus a local community bus covering Little Baddow and Danbury. The villages are close to the A12 which links London to Chelmsford, Colchester, Ipswich and the East coast. There is a good rail link from Chelmsford into London Liverpool Street.



Several bus services run from Chelmsford to

### **SOCIAL FACTORS**

Danbury and Little Baddow are very affluent areas with 50% of the properties in Council Tax Bands F and above. There is little property for the first-time buyer. Many houses are large detached owner-occupied homes and what social housing there was has mostly been sold under the right to buy. There is a small Almshouse development in each village but opportunities for younger people or young families are restricted, whether first time buyers of those wishing to rent.

The population is almost exclusively white with 25% over the statutory pension age. Many residents commute to London or Chelmsford to work, although there is a growing population of people working or running businesses from home.

An outcome of this is that there are more older people and fewer families with young children than in most areas and where there are children they attend schools outside of the area. They pride themselves on still being villages with a sense of community and involvement rather than just places where people come to sleep at night.

### **FACILITIES**

Danbury has shops and local services, including convenience stores, a petrol station, 2 cafés, takeaway meal facilities and 5 pubs which all serve food. Little Baddow has no shops and limited local services. Indeed, the lack of services leads to a sense of community and looking after ourselves. Most people shop in Maldon or Chelmsford or Danbury for convenience shopping. There are two pubs both of which serve food and a tea room at Little Baddow lock on the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation.

In Little Baddow there is a large and well used village hall and the church's St Andrew's Rooms, both of which have a range of social and cultural activities. There is a volunteer run History Centre adjacent to the URC Chapel which holds interesting exhibitions. Little Baddow has a sports ground and pavilion and an active cricket club with matches every weekend during the season.

The Danbury Sports & Social Centre offers a gym and playing fields with a variety of dance and sports groups and other social events. Danbury Village Hall is popular for a number of community groups. Relationships between the church and Village Hall are good and the incumbent and churchwardens are trustees. The church has strong links with Danbury Parish Council.

In Danbury there is a new Medical Centre with some 6 GPs plus nursing staff and three dental surgeries. There are no doctors or medical facilities in Little Baddow and people use either of the neighbouring surgeries in Boreham or Danbury.

St Joseph's Nursing Home in Danbury is a care home with nursing and has 50 residents. The church provides monthly communion services at the home, and sometimes members of the congregation visit residents and bring some of them to Church events such as Carol Services.

## **SCHOOLS**

### ***Primary Education***

#### ***Danbury Pre-School***

Danbury Pre-School takes children from 2 – 5 years old. It is based in a new purpose-built centre in the grounds of St John's School.

#### ***St John's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School***

##### ***Danbury Park Community Primary School:***

Clergy from St John Baptist have visited Danbury Park for assemblies in the past but there has been little contact since there was a change of head teacher.

***Heathcote: Independent Preparatory School*** taking children from 4 – 11 years old and we are developing our links with it. They are holding a carol service in the church this year.

***Elm Green: Independent Preparatory School*** is the only school in Little Baddow. The church has links with this school such as at Christmas but most of their pupils come from a distance. Most primary age children in Little Baddow attend Danbury St John's School, Woodham Walter School, or private schools.

### ***Secondary Education***

There are Comprehensive Schools at Sandon, Maldon and South Woodham Ferrers. Single sex Grammar Schools in Chelmsford and Public schools at Brentwood and Colchester.

## 8. THE CHURCH BUILDINGS

### THE CHURCHES

The parish church of St John the Baptist, Danbury, is the oldest building in the village and grade I listed, the north aisle dates from Edward I in the 13th century. The church is open every day for private worship. The views from the tower are impressive, especially to the south. There are eight bells, which are regularly rung for services. The organ was rebuilt in the 1950s with further work being carried out in the 1980s and in 2005. The church has three rare wooden effigies dating from the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. In the nave are many distinctive carved pew ends. The 2015 Quinquennial described the building as 'well maintained'. An annual parish workday and maintenance programme ensures that the building stays ahead of dilapidation and aims to enhance the benefit to the congregation and community at large.



The parish church of St Mary the Virgin, Little Baddow, is a historic 11<sup>th</sup> century church with 13<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century additions. We are just commencing having the church open (3 days a week in winter with the plan to go full time in the summer). The church is notable for wall paintings discovered relatively recently, including separate paintings of St Christopher and the Devil, and wooden effigies. It is grade I listed. It is located outside the village centre adjacent to the then manor house. It has a peal of eight

bells and an enthusiastic band of ringers who ring for services. The church is well maintained, and we were commended in our 2016 Quinquennial for how well the church was maintained with all identified work having been carried out. We are just completing the replacement of the south side of the roof and porch roof (the north side having been replaced in 2013) with the aid of a LPOW (Listed Places of Worship) grant. Other recent work has involved replacing the church lighting, getting planning permission for, and commencing work to a car park, repairs to the floor and tombs and a few years ago extending a ringing chamber and creating a tower room below plus an external toilet. Our active Fabric Forum oversees maintenance and does a lot of the day to day repairs themselves.

### THE CHURCHYARDS

Both sites are very picturesque and tranquil.

The churchyard at Danbury is mainly to the south and west of the church. It contains about 1500 graves and is currently open. Permission has been given to reuse part of the oldest churchyard to the East of the church which will last at most three years. There is an allotment area on Glebe land to the West of the newest churchyard which would have to be reclaimed by the church if it wishes to keep the churchyard open. There is a Garden of Remembrance for Interred Ashes with an area reserved for future expansion. The churchyard is kept in good order by our groundsman (who receives an honorarium) and his team of helpers. It is surrounded principally by green areas.



Little Baddow has a large historic churchyard and has purchased a large adjoining field which has been consecrated as the churchyard extension. This means that our churchyard is open and should remain so for a long time to come. There is an area for the burial of ashes. The churchyard is maintained by a dedicated “churchyard gang” of volunteers, not all of whom are active church goers. It has extensive views over the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation and countryside.

#### **LITTLE BADDOW - ST ANDREW'S ROOMS**

Away from the church in the centre of Little Baddow village is our community hall, St Andrew's Rooms. It was the old church school which was bought by a parishioner for the church to use as a resource for the village. It comprises one large room with a kitchen corner plus a small chapel room and toilets with a recently landscaped garden at the rear. It is used by a wide range of village organisations as well as the church. It is used every weekday and most weekends and evenings. We hold a weekly Celtic Morning Prayer there and evening services during the winter plus it is sometimes used for our informal service. While our roof was being replaced we held all services there. We installed gas central heating in 2016 (carried out by church members) and plan to replace the windows in the coming year.

#### **LITTLE BADDOW - ST MARY'S RECTORY**

The Rectory in Little Baddow is owned by the Diocese and has been used by a Diocesan Officer and is now vacant. It is expected that our new priest will reside in the Rectory in Danbury, but it is very important to us that he or she is visible, active and known in Little Baddow.

#### **DANBURY - ST JOHN'S CHURCH MEETING ROOM**

Adjacent to the church, close by the west door, is a Meeting Room. This is equipped with a kitchen (refurbished in 2017) and toilets, including one for disabled persons. The ceiling was replaced in 2016. The room, which can hold about 75 people, may easily be divided into three separate units. It is used for many church events including the Mothers' Union and for PCC meetings. Coffee is always served in the room after the Sunday 10.00 a.m. service.

The Meeting Room is also hired for parties and wedding, christening and funeral receptions. It has a large lawned area with a barbecue. It is very popular with many village groups – Art Classes, Ladies Keep Fit, the Danbury Society to name a few. It is in use nearly every day and the lettings make a very useful contribution to church funds

**40 MILLFIELDS, DANBURY**, is located about 5 minutes' drive from the church and was purchased by the PCC in 1989 for £92,000. It is used by a curate when in post, otherwise it is let. It is one end of a terrace of three and has a separate study and three bedrooms.

## 9. FINANCIAL STATUS

### Danbury:

In 2016 our income was £91,000 and after paying £60,000 family purse in full, we ended the year with a surplus of £1000. This was the first time for several years that we had been able to pay our share of the family purse in full. For the year 2017 we have budgeted an income of £94,000 and after paying the family purse of £62,000, we do not anticipate any surplus. At the end of 2016 our cash holdings were £58,000. In 2016 the restricted funds had a surplus of £2000, after expenditure of £11,000 to refurbish and tile part of the south aisle to provide a multi-use community and children's area. Two years ago the church green was reinforced to improve car parking. Projects planned for the future include an overhaul of the boiler and church heating system and repair of the clock. In September 2016 we introduced the Parish Giving Scheme <https://www.parishgivingscheme.org.uk> and now nearly 70% of our giving is by Direct Debit through this scheme. We are one of the highest contributors to the scheme in the Diocese.

### Little Baddow:

In 2016 our gross income was £66,613 into unrestricted funds and £87,170 into restricted funds, which latter mentioned amount included £70,499 of grant income (the majority of which was LPOW grant for a new south side to our roof) and recovery of VAT. We paid our Parish Share of £35,983 in full as we have every year. We ended the year with a surplus of £11,883 in the unrestricted Funds. At the end of 2016 our total cash holdings (excluding balance of grant monies) were £107,873 and investments valued at 39,479. We held a stewardship campaign a few years ago with increased planned giving by 50%, over 80% of which is currently paid by standing order.

We have a giving policy of an amount equal to at least 10% of general fund income and exceeded this last year giving £6,000 to our main mission link the Umpium Refugee School and £1,421 to other charities on our approved list.

## 10. DANBURY - ST JOHN'S RECTORY



The detached Rectory is owned by the Diocese and stands in grounds of one half acre to the west of Church Green. It was built in 1967 with brick-built cavity walls under a hipped plain-tiled roof and single storey flat roofed extensions. On the ground floor there is a south-west facing lounge with brick-built open fire, a dining room, a kitchen, a study



and a toilet. Both the sitting room and dining room have fold back doors which open to create a large area for entertaining. It has four bedrooms upstairs, one of which has an en-suite bathroom, and a family bathroom.

The central heating and hot water are from an oil-fired boiler. Double glazing was installed about eight years ago. There is a large garden area and a garage and ample parking for further cars.



The study is directly opposite the front door and can be secluded from the remainder of the house. Next to the study is a cloakroom with toilet.