

Embargoed to Sunday 18 January 2026

Announcement for the Benefice of Ightham and Wrotham

The Bishop of Rochester is delighted to announce that the Rev. Stewart Gibbs is to be appointed as the new Rector for the Benefice of Ightham and Wrotham.

Stewart served his curacy at St John's, North Grays (Diocese of Chelmsford) after training for ordination at Ridley Hall, Cambridge. Stewart has been incumbent of two parishes in Essex – Hatfield Heath and Sheering, and currently High Ongar with Norton Mandeville. In addition, Stewart has been looking after the parish of Willingale. Stewart has also been Chaplain to St Mellitus Theological College and a teacher at Bancroft's and Brentwood Schools.

Stewart writes - " I am really looking forward to joining you as we begin this new chapter together, and discern how God is calling us to be his people in Ightham and Wrotham. I am committed to making everyone feel welcomed and accepted as we reach out those in our village communities. I hope that we will grow in faith together, deepening our reliance on God and his good purposes for our lives in Christ. I am excited about the opportunities to engage with the local school, community groups and village events to show and share the love of Jesus."

Please pray for Stewart as he gets ready to move, and the churches and communities he leaves behind.

Archdeacon Nick is thrilled Stewart is joining the Tonbridge Archdeaconry. The Archdeacon offers his prayers for all those in High Ongar with Norton Mandeville as they begin the process of saying goodbye to Stewart, and also prayers for all those in the Benefice of Ightham and Wrotham at this exciting time, and for Stewart in the coming months as he prepares for this new ministry

It is hoped that Stewart will be licenced in May subject to DBS.

Issued by the office of Ven Nick Cornell, Archdeacon of Tonbridge
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