

***The Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin***  
Shenfield, Essex

**The Parish Profile**



Welcome to St Mary the Virgin,  
where Christians have learnt to love and worship God  
for hundreds of years

## **GREETINGS FROM THE CHURCHWARDENS AND MEMBERS OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL.**

***We are looking and praying for a priest to come and live and minister within our local community. Below is an outline of the person we believe that God is calling to St. Mary's. Could this person be you?***

### **ARE YOU CALLED TO BE OUR NEW RECTOR?**

We are looking and praying for someone:-

- whose life is rooted in prayer and the Eucharist;
- who, through the worship of the church, will move people to experience God's love;
- who will be able to connect the Bible to everyday life in a modern, imaginative and creative way;
- who will encourage people to serve God and one another;
- who will develop the spiritual life of the church;
- who will be warm, compassionate and ready to listen to those whom he or she meets, both inside and outside the church congregation;
- who will collaborate with our ministry team and encourage all to use their skills and talents in the service of God;
- who will be able to communicate effectively, be at ease in this 'middle of the road' church and enable it to fulfil its mission;
- who will promote an active relationship with other local churches;
- who is able to reconcile differing views on many topics and be prepared to carry through decisions once determined;
- who will minister amongst young people. We have people 'queueing up' to attend the Christmas Eve services, and to get their children places at our school – we would like to see more of them at the ordinary services – how can we attract them?

### **VISION STATEMENT**

In the light of God's call, and our situation here, our vision is that we, the Parish Church of St Mary's, Shenfield, should:-

1. act as the Body of Christ in the world;
2. proclaim the gospel and bear witness in word and deed to the love of God made known in Jesus Christ;
3. reflect and respond to the love of God
  - by the quality of our worship and fellowship;
  - by our sensitive, respectful and supportive concern for the needs of body, mind and spirit of people of all ages without distinction both in our own community and in the wider world;
  - by our care for the natural world.

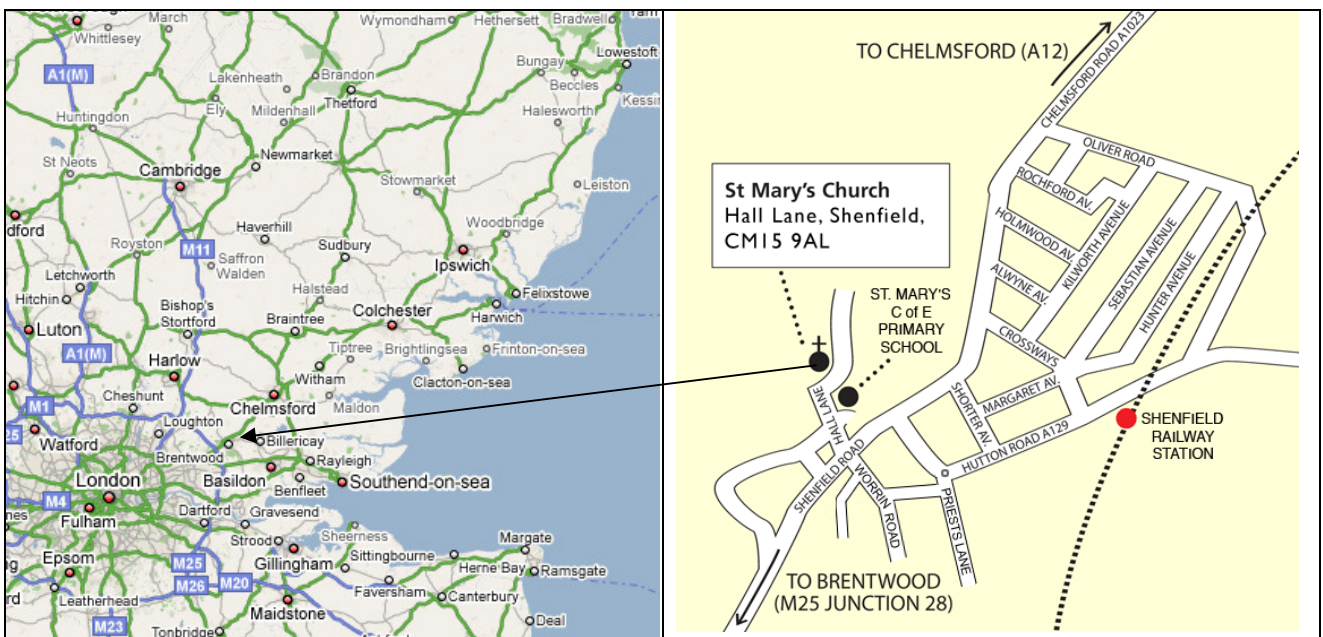
## THE SHENFIELD AREA

Shenfield (population in excess of 5000) is a suburb of the Borough of Brentwood. Situated on the edge of the Essex countryside, its proximity and excellent road and rail links to London make it a very attractive place to live.

The Parish of Shenfield is in the Deanery of Brentwood and the Diocese of Chelmsford.

The populated area of Shenfield is in the form of a triangle between the London to Norwich railway line and the main road (A12) from Brentwood towards Chelmsford. North west of the main road, the parish extends across countryside towards Mountnessing and Doddinghurst.

Shenfield is situated less than 4 miles from junction 28 of the M25 motorway and has direct access from the main A12.



There is a strong community feeling with many established families choosing to stay in the area and a lot of new families moving in. Many of the people in the area are motivated, educated and articulate professionals.

Frequent fast commuter trains link Shenfield railway station and London Liverpool Street Station. Because of this good train service to the heart of the City house prices are high.



**Shenfield Broadway**

There are a number of independent shops in the area, a public library and the Parish Hall.

The Meeting House of the Society of Friends is also situated within the parish. The neighbouring parish of Hutton contains two Anglican churches, All Saints' and St. Peter's, as well as having the Hutton and Shenfield Union Church, Hutton Free Church and St. Joseph the Worker Roman Catholic Church within its boundaries.

These churches enjoy strong relationships with each other and have collaborated as 'Churches Together in Hutton and Shenfield' for many years. They currently hold special joint services to mark Remembrance Sunday, the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and Christian Aid Week. Recent activities have included carol singing among the Christmas shoppers in Shenfield, evening meditations (led by the clergy) and discussion groups in Lent, the publication of Christmas and Easter leaflets to be circulated to every house in Shenfield and Hutton, and a Walk of Witness on Good Friday. The Committee contains lay representatives from each of the churches, as well as a representative of the Clergy Fraternal. Committee meetings are held monthly at each church in turn, with a Minister in attendance.

St. Mary's Church has a Parish Service Scheme and representatives cover all roads in the parish, offering residents information about the church and the area, friendship and practical support, thereby strengthening the Christian spirit within the community.

## **MISSION AND MINISTRY**

At St Mary's, we place great importance on the church's role as a channel of Christ's Mission. We seek to develop our own community life and to nurture the faith of church members, while at the same time reaching out to the wider community of Shenfield and beyond. We are aware of the impact to be made by individual church members in their daily lives, maintaining a Christian presence in the wider world. Equally important is the role of the monthly Parish Magazine, which circulates well beyond the regular church congregation.

There is a strong sense of fellowship within the congregation, spanning the generations, leading to a friendly atmosphere and warm relationships. The level of concern people have for one another is reflected in the way they care for each other and go out of their way to offer their support.

The church gives a warm welcome to those who come to its services and also to those who visit the church at other times. Cards are available for newcomers to complete so that a later visit can be arranged.

Within the St Mary's community, commitment is high and opportunities are sought to involve as many people as possible in the worship and activities of the church. Lay involvement is encouraged, whether it be in reading, leading intercessions, the ministry of communion, serving at the altar, singing in the choir or ringing the bells. Respect is shown for different approaches by maintaining the use of the Book of Common Prayer (BCP) services alongside Common Worship (CW), as well as by exploring different forms of worship through the monthly "Open Door".

As far as possible, we maintain an open approach in our response to requests for baptisms, weddings or funerals. We give a generous welcome, seeing such occasions as opportunities to demonstrate the love of God to those seeking such ministry.

We are keen to promote knowledge of the work of missionary and other organisations engaged in the work of Christ, whether locally or abroad. Each year we select a number of such organisations to support financially, regularly publicising their work through articles in the Parish Magazine and occasional displays in church. Money is raised for this through a number of targeted collections and by holding a wide range of events, which attract not only churchgoers, but also others who would otherwise have little reason to take part in church life. The fellowship generated by these events not only enhances the life of the church, but also helps to build links with the wider community both in the parish and beyond.



**The congregation**

## **LOCAL AMENITIES**

- There is one infant/junior school in the parish - St. Mary's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School. The school, which has an outstanding Ofsted report, is situated opposite the church. It provides a safe, secure and caring Christian environment, where every individual is accepted and respected. It endeavours to give access to a curriculum and a range of learning experiences of the highest standard. There is an active contribution from the clergy and regular weekly services are held in the church.



- Shenfield High School is a high-performing school. It specialises in Business and Enterprise and Maths and Computing. It is situated within the parish and is a mixed non-denominational school with its own sixth form.
- There are other state infant, junior and senior schools outside the parish.
- There are two private schools just outside, one being Brentwood School (3 years – 18 years), which is located almost one mile from the church, and the other is Herington House, an Infant and Junior School which is located near Shenfield railway station.
- There are two pre-school groups in the parish.
- The Courage Playing Fields are situated next to St. Mary's School and are used by people of all ages.
- The Brentwood Community Hospital is being rebuilt and will open in 2008. Rectors of St. Mary's Church have acted as chaplains to the previous hospital.
- The Shenfield Parish Hall is a registered charity. The trustees and secretary function as a management committee, who run the hall for the benefit of the local community. The Rector of St. Mary's, Shenfield, is the chairman and the St. Mary's Parochial Church Council appoints two other trustees.



**The Shenfield Parish Hall**

## THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST. MARY THE VIRGIN SHENFIELD

Prayer has been offered in St. Mary's for more than 750 years and it has 'soaked into the walls', giving the church a special atmosphere.

Every Sunday between 150 and 200 people worship here. Holy Communion is celebrated at 8 am and the Parish Eucharist at 9.30 am. An evening service is held at 6.30 pm. Matins is sung on the second Sunday of the month at 11 am. At the 9.30 am service there is a crèche for small children.

### WORSHIP AT ST MARY THE VIRGIN, SHENFIELD

DAY	TIME	SERVICE	Average attendance
Sunday	8 am Said	Holy Communion: First Sunday - BCP; Other Sundays - CW Order One.	22
Sunday	9.30 am Sung	Parish Eucharist (Crèche provided): (First Sunday - Parade Service); First and third Sundays - 'Celebrating Together' (booklet based on Common Worship); Third Sunday - Baptism at 9.30 and 11.15 am; Second, fourth and fifth Sundays - CW Order One.	127
Second Sunday each month and Christmas Day, Easter Sunday, Pentecost, Remembrance Sunday	11 am Sung	Matins - BCP.	24
Sunday	6.30 pm	Evening Services: First, fourth and fifth Sundays - Evensong - BCP; Second Sunday - 'Open Door' (informal worship and discussion); Third Sunday - sung Eucharist CW Order One.	20
Thursday	11 am Said	First Thursday - BCP; Second, third, fourth, fifth Thursdays - CW Order One.	12

## Special Services

- Two Christingle Services at 3 pm and 4.15 pm two weeks before Christmas.
- Three Family Carol Services on Christmas Eve at 3 pm, 4.15 pm and 5.30 pm - attendance 1,000 people in total.
- During 2008, 8 Weddings and 46 Baptisms are booked.
- 9 adults and 14 young people were confirmed in March and April 2008.
- Sung Eucharists are held on Ash Wednesday (8 pm), Ascension Day (8 pm) and Christmas Eve (11.30 pm)
- Special services are held throughout Holy Week.

Members of the Ministry Team regularly take Communion to the housebound, the sick and those in local care homes.



**Confirmation Service – April 2008**

Music plays an important part in our worship and parish life. We have a new three-manual organ. There is currently one regular organist and others can be called upon. At the present time St. Mary's is trying to recruit a Director of Music. The choir mainly comprises experienced singers and there is a particular need to widen its membership.

In the Tower there are six bells and there have been some notable peals rung on these bells over the years. The Master of the Tower holds practice sessions.

The congregation is a cross-section of local people with a mixture of long-term residents and, in recent years, there has been an encouraging increase in younger families attending the 9.30 am service.

The electoral roll for 2008 currently stands at 344, of which 228 are resident within the parish and 116 outside.

## MINISTRY TEAM AND LAY PARTICIPATION

This includes:

- a part-time non-stipendiary Curate
- two Readers
- a Parish Lay Worker
- a Lay Evangelist
- a Pastoral Assistant
- 11 Lay Ministers of Communion
- 2 Churchwardens and 2 Deputies
- 26 Sidespeople
- a team of over 50 who read lessons or lead intercessions during services
- an excellent paid part-time caretaker, residing in Church Cottage
- a baptism team led by young mothers



**The Rev'd Eileen Lockhart - Curate**

The Parochial Church Council is a vibrant body, which meets approximately six times a year. The incumbent chairs this committee. The PCC operates through a number of committees, officers and working parties as follows:

- Standing Committee/Finance Committee
- Communications Committee
- Education Committee
- Mission and Unity Committee
- Fundraising Group
- Social Committee
- Worship Committee
- Environmental Group
- Stewardship Committee
- Health and Safety Committee
- Fabric Officer
- Land Officer
- Tree Officer

We encourage all people to offer their gifts in the service of God in their work, their local communities and the world.

## THE CHURCH AND GROUNDS

We know there was a Rector here in 1249, so there must have been a church too. The nave, the oldest existing part, was probably built at that time.

Some 250 years later the church was enlarged by adding another aisle. To do this, one wall had to be demolished and, to hold up the roof, the most distinctive feature of the church was erected - the wooden columns forming an arcade. This, though not unique, is very rare. Each column is hewn from an individual oak tree.

The splendid porch, tower and shingled spire were built in the 15th century. In the 19th century a new chancel was added on, the existing one becoming part of the nave. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century a new floor, choir and clergy vestries and toilets were added.

The churchyard consists of three parts, the more ancient, surrounding the church itself, and two on the other side of Hall Lane. There is a Garden of Remembrance with a memorial wall, upon which are inscribed the names of those whose ashes have been interred there.

The Butterfly Meadow, opened in 2005, has captured the interest of the wider community. Many people, including St. Mary's School, are willing to help maintain this pleasant and peaceful area next door to the main graveyard. This 1.3 acre field was given to St. Mary's Church by the Courage family early in the last century for eventual use as a graveyard. In 2005, recognising that we would not need the site for this purpose for many years to come, we asked for ideas about how the meadow could be used for more immediate community benefit, and the idea of the Butterfly Meadow was born. Today it is a significant nature conservation area.



## THE INCUMBENT'S HOUSE

The rectory is a large double-fronted house built in 1901 and extended in 1910. This house has been well maintained and is located about half a mile from the church.

The rectory has secluded front and rear gardens. The house comprises:

### Downstairs

- 1 sitting room
- 1 family room
- 1 study located near the main entrance
- 1 kitchen leading to a utility room
- 1 cloakroom

### Upstairs

- 5 bedrooms
- 2 bathrooms



### Outside

1 small detached garage

There is a small storeroom joined to the house, which can be accessed only from the outside.

## ORGANISATIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE CHURCH

Name of Group	Age
<p><b><u>Footprints</u></b> All parents and carers with pre-school children are invited to join. They meet on Wednesday afternoons during term-time from 1.15pm until 2.45pm in the Parish Hall for craft, songs and lots of fun. Every other Wednesday a Bible story will accompany the craft.</p>	0 – 4 years
<p><b><u>Trekkers (Sunday School)</u></b> Children aged 4-10 are welcome at Trekkers (formerly the Sunday School), which meets in St Mary's School hall, opposite the church, on Sundays from 9.30 to 10.30 am - except the first Sunday, when they come to church. The work is varied and geared to different ages and abilities. Twice a year they hold a service in the church, and there are Summer and Christmas activities.</p>	4 – 10 years
<p><b><u>Stompers (Youth Group)</u></b> Young people from 11 to 14 join SToMPers, the Youth Group affiliated to St Mary's. They meet in Shenfield Parish Hall every third Friday in the month from 7.00 to 9.00 pm and occasionally in between for sporting activities. Other activities include discos, games and outings.</p>	11 – 14 years
<p><b><u>Scouts/Cubs/Beavers</u></b> The 1st Shenfield Scout Group: Beavers (6-8s); Cubs (8-10s); Scouts (10-15s); Venture Scouts (15-20s). These groups attend quarterly parade services in St. Mary's Church on the first Sunday in the month at 9.30 am.</p>	4 – 18 years
<p><b><u>Guides/Brownies/Rainbows</u></b> The Shenfield District Guides have two Brownie Packs, a Guide Company and the Sherwood Rangers. Rainbows (5-7s); Brownies (7-10s); Guides (10-14s); Rangers (14-18s). These groups attend monthly parade services in St. Mary's Church on the first Sunday in the month at 9.30 am.</p>	4 – 18 years
<p><b><u>Mothers' Union</u></b> There is a large branch in the parish, covering a wide age range. Members are fully involved in the life and work of the parish. They also take part in diocesan projects designed to strengthen family relationships and to assist families in adversity. Currently the Diocesan President lives in the parish and worships at St. Mary's.</p>	Adults
<p><b><u>St. Mary's Open Branch</u></b> This group was formed in 1967 and membership is open to women. They meet in the Parish Hall once a month and hear speakers on all sorts of topics. Theatre trips and coach outings to places of local and national interest are arranged during the year. Visitors are always welcome. Corporate Communion are held four times during the year.</p>	Adults
<p><b><u>Garden Society</u></b> The Garden Society meets in the Parish Hall once a month. Their aim is to encourage, improve and extend the cultivation of flowers, fruit and vegetables. They hold three shows each year and have coffee mornings, a Christmas supper and various outings.</p>	Adults

## FINANCE

St. Mary's is the largest contributor to the Deanery Share with an allocation for 2008 of £126,096. In spite of regular appeals we have struggled to meet our target during recent years. In 2007 the General Fund was in balance, but there was an excess of expenditure over income on the Restricted Funds.

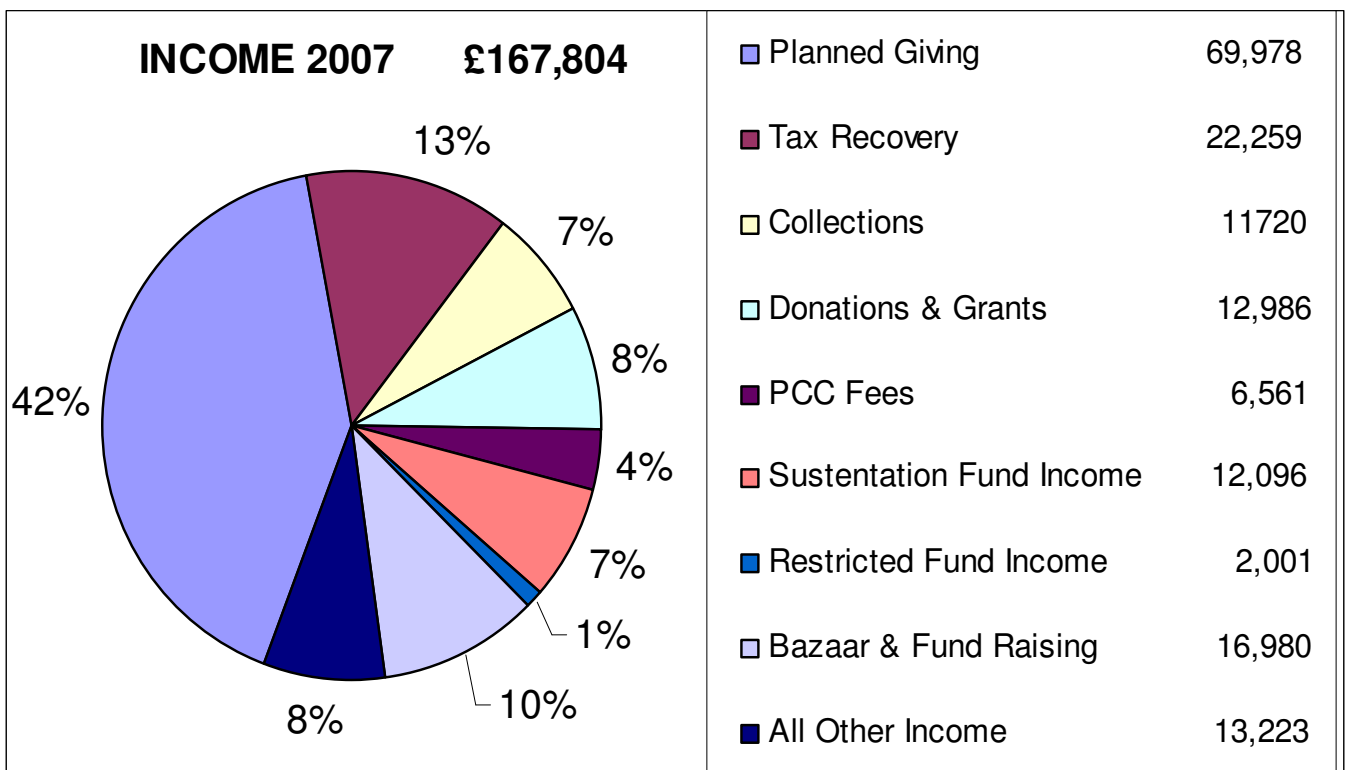
Special appeals enabled major expenditure since the millennium, which has included a new three manual organ, complete replacement lighting and development of the Butterfly Meadow. Special appeals provided most of the money required for these projects. Restricted funds for Fabric, Churchyard, Bells, Soft Furnishings and the Youth Group exist to support these activities. In addition the fundraising group collects money each year (equivalent to 10% of the prior year's voluntary income) to support selected local and national charities, with any surplus helping to meet the Deanery Share.

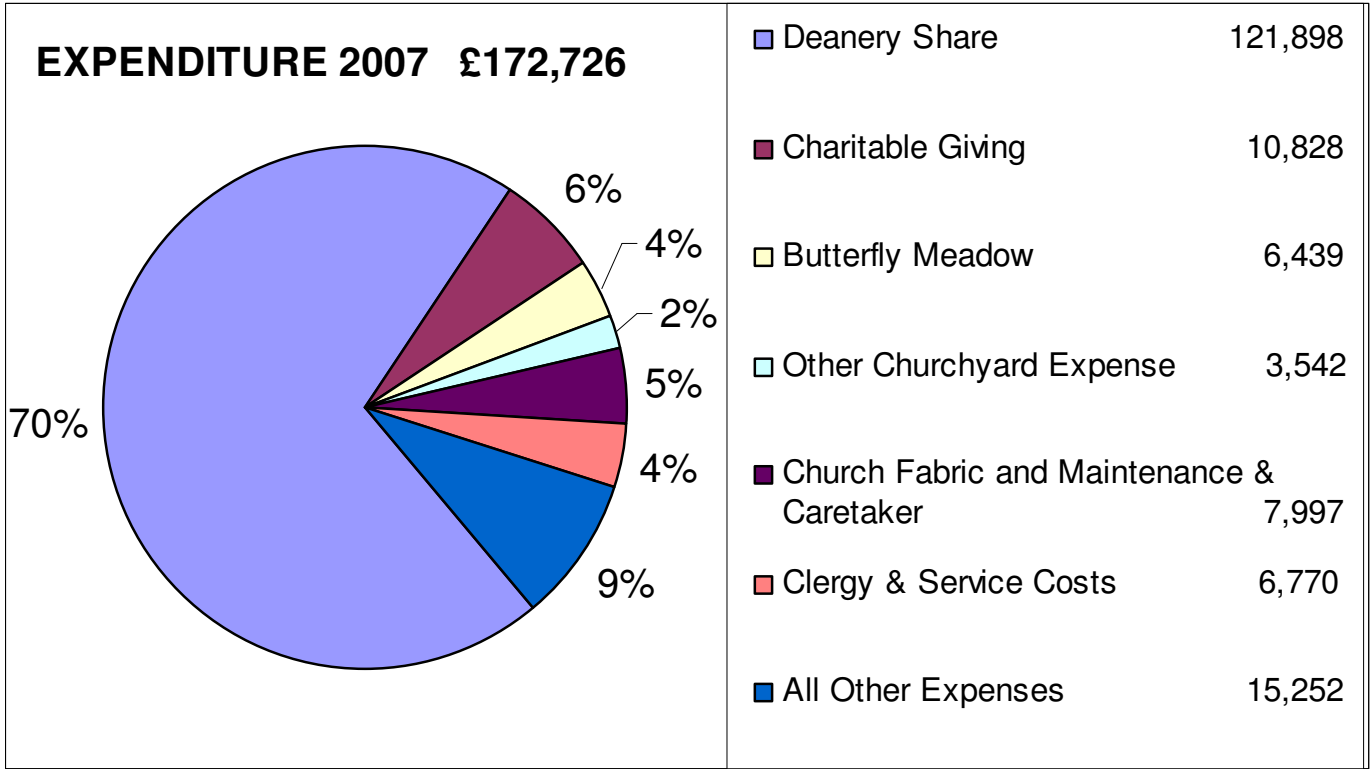
Clergy are provided with monthly allowances for expenses.

We have a strong Stewardship Scheme run by the Stewardship Committee. Members of the congregation are encouraged to donate under Gift Aid.

The Parochial Church Council owns the caretaker's house.

The Parochial Church Council has provided a computer for the use of the incumbent.





***This completes the statement of the aspirations of this church.***

***We pray that God will guide the right person to become our Rector***

***We encourage you to visit our web site for further information***  
[www.stmaryschurch-shenfield.org.uk](http://www.stmaryschurch-shenfield.org.uk)

***or***

***Contact: Edna Grimble (Churchwarden) 01277 222353 or Molly Hoyle (Churchwarden) 01277 226929***