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## Rector retiring

PICTURED with his wife Anne is Canon John Fitch who retires as Rector of Monks Eleigh with Chelsworth and Brent Eleigh with Milden at the end of the month.

Canon Fitch has spent the whole of his 40-year ministry in Suffolk but now plans to hop over the border into Essex to retire to his new home at Great Yeldham.

Born at Mistley, Canon Fitch was a student at Cambridge University where he gained a degree in history and theology before going on to train for the ministry at Wells Theological College.

Ordained in 1947, he became curate to All Saints, Newmarket, before taking up his first living as Vicar of Reydon from 1951 to 1978. During his 19-year stay he

also became chaplain to St Felix School.

Prior to his current post, Canon Fitch was Rector of Brandon and Santon Downham for ten years. He was made a canon in 1975 and became rural dean of Mildenhall in 1978.

Canon Fitch has been Rector at Monks Eleigh for the past six and a half years and concludes his ministry in the parishes on June 20.

"We are, of course, sad to be leaving and would like to return our thanks for all the kindness, friendship and support we have received our time here," he told the Free Press.

Canon Fitch and his wife are moving into their new home at The Oak House, Great Yeldham, on July 2.